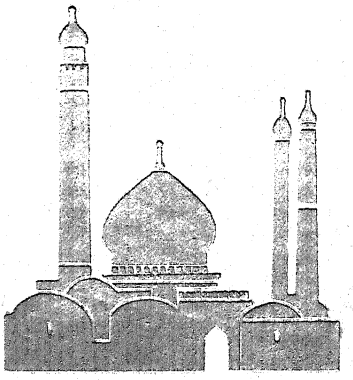

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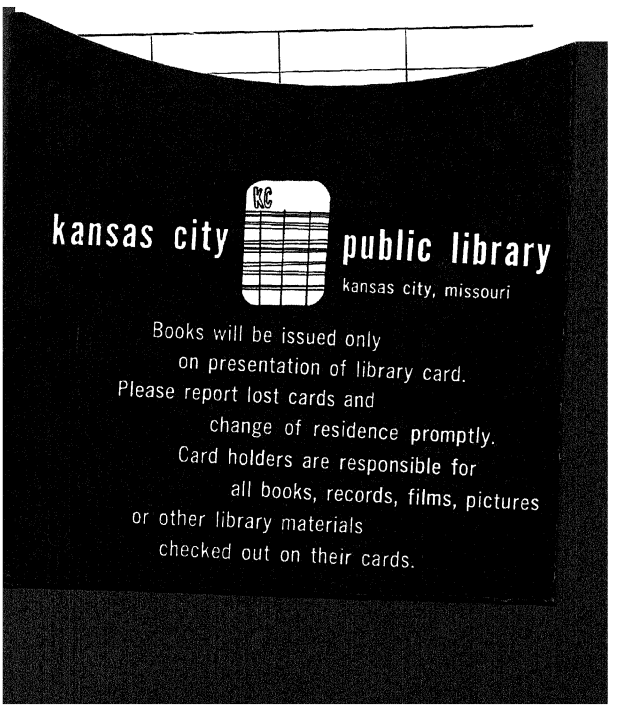

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Middle East Pilgrimage

By R. PARK JOHNSON

Middle East Pilgrimage

FRIENDSHIP PRESS NEW YORK

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Contents

EXPLANATORY FOREWORD ix

INTRODUCTION
A New Pilgrimage in the Middle East 1
The Old Pathways of Pilgrimage, 2
The Essential Elements of Pilgrimage, 5
What Shall Be the Way of the New Pilgrimage?, 6

CHAPTER 1
Along the Line of March 8
The Simple Village and the Complex City, 9
What Is the Middle East?, 10
The Arab World, 13
Minority Peoples in the Middle East, 15

CHAPTER 2
Journey Through the Ages 17
The Birth of Arab Nationalism, 19
The Dream of Arab Independence, 20

Palestine—the "Much-Promised" Land, 21
The Mandates of a Divided Arab World, 22
The Crucial Question of Palestine, 24
Partition, War, and Refugees, 26
The Journey Becomes a Pilgrimage, 31

CHAPTER 3
Roadways of the New Pilgrimage 33
Common Factors in the Life of the Middle East, 33
The Influence of the West, 34 • Nationalism, 35 • Problems in Attaining Democracy, 37 • Underdeveloped Resources, 40 • Social Awareness and Economic Opportunity, 42 • The Appeal of Communism, 44 • The Tradition of Islam, 46
Diversity in the Middle East, 47
The Perplexity in the Middle Eastern Mind, 50

CHAPTER 4
The Road to Mecca 54
Varieties of Religious Faith, 55
The Road to Mecca, 57
The Career of Muhammad, 57
Muhammad's Choice, 59
The Expansion of the Arab Empire, 60
Diversity of Allegiance to Islam, 61
Folk Islam, 61 • Conservative Islam, 62 • Modern Reform in Islam, 63 • Islam as a Society, 64 • "Post-Islamic" Secularism, 65

CHAPTER 5
A Christian View of the Meccan Road 66
The Strengths of Islam, 66
The Silences of Islam, 69
Christianity in the Muslim Mind, 75
Religion and the New Pilgrimage, 77

CHAPTER 6
Is Christianity the Way? 79
The Christian Church in History, 80
Muslim Conquest and Christian Minorities, 81
Survival of the Church, 83
The Sectarian Division of Society, 85
The Silent Centuries, 86
The Advent of Protestant Missions, 88
The Early Strategy of the Christian Mission, 89
Results of Early Missionary Labors, 93
The Problem of Proselytism, 94
Current Trends in the Eastern Churches, 98
The Churches and the New Pilgrimage, 103

CHAPTER 7
The Highway of the World Christian Mission 104
Developing Strategy in the Christian Mission, 105
New Patterns of Approach to Non-Christians, 106
Forms of Direct Evangelism, 107 • Service to Human Need, 111 • Toward a Missionary Church, 117

Developing an Indigenous Church, 121
How Can the Mission Be Less Foreign?, 123
The Middle Eastern Church and the World Mission Highway, 126

CHAPTER 8
Throughway into the Future 127
The Direction of the Middle East Pilgrimage, 129
Will It Be Communism?, 130 • *Will It Be Islam?*, 132 • *Will It Be the West?*, 134
The Key Role of Christianity, 135
The Demonstration of Moral Principle, 136 • *The Foundation of Moral Principle*, 138 • *Truth Will Emerge Where Liberty Prevails*, 141
The Opportunity of the Evangelical Church, 146
The Patience of the Pilgrim, 149

APPENDICES
Appendix A—Branches, Sects, and Derivatives of Islam 152
Appendix B—Divisions of the Ancient Eastern Church 154
Appendix C—Evangelical Churches and Missions in the Middle East, Past and Present 157

A SELECTED READING LIST 162

EXPLANATORY FOREWORD

THE term "Middle East" is of relatively recent origin. It has for many purposes replaced the older term "Near East" as a designation for the lands of West Asia and North Africa, with the inclusion sometimes of the southeastern tip of Europe. These terms, now synonymous and interchangeable, have never been exactly defined to the satisfaction of everyone. In this volume, Middle East is used to cover the area included in the Near East Christian Council (regions one to twelve below) together with West Pakistan. The Near East Christian Council is one of the regional constituents of the worldwide International Missionary Council. Another affiliated body is the National Christian Council of Pakistan. Since the inception of this new nation in 1947, West Pakistan in particular has been brought increasingly into closer contact with the other predominantly Muslim countries that are its western neighbors. Afghanistan, also sometimes included in the area of the Middle East, has no Christian

mission work thus far, although there is a church congregation composed of foreigners in the capital city of Kabul.

The Middle East, as discussed in this volume, is broadly defined to comprise the following thirteen countries or regions. (Reference to a map is suggested at this point):

(1) Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya
(2) Egypt
(3) Sudan and Ethiopia (These countries, together with the Somalilands, have many relationships with East and Central Africa)
(4) Israel (which remains unrecognized by the Arab nations)
(5) Jordan
(6) Lebanon
(7) Syria
(8) Cyprus (It is a British colony, but Greece and Turkey both have interests in it)
(9) Turkey (It has important European relationships)
(10) Iran
(11) Iraq
(12) The Arabian peninsula, composed of Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and a number of smaller principalities around the coastline that are in treaty relationship with Great Britain (Aden is the only actual colony, belonging to Great Britain)

(13) West Pakistan (Along with East Pakistan, a dominion of the British Commonwealth of Nations with many relationships with India and Southeast Asia)

INTRODUCTION

A New Pilgrimage in the Middle East

ONE OF THE OLDEST AND MOST HONORED RELIGIOUS CUSTOMS in the Middle East is the practice of pilgrimage. Today there is a vast new pilgrimage taking place in this historic area on one of the world's most important crossroads. It is no longer little bands of religious devotees, but whole peoples who are on the march; indeed, it is the restless movement of an entire confused civilization.

The well marked trails of traditional life in the Middle East have been obscured in recent years and the old signposts have fallen down. Drifting sandstorms of new ideas and new ways, moving in from other parts of the modern world, threaten to obliterate the established patterns of life for every nation of West Asia, North Africa, and Southeast Europe. The result is a widespread cultural pilgrimage.

For some, this pilgrimage has become a forced march

under arms or a violent movement toward hostile strongholds of privilege and power. For others, it is the groping of the hungry or the wandering of the homeless.

Many Middle Eastern peoples are living in an atmosphere of bitter frustration and grim hatred. Despair rather than hope is their ruling emotion. They have failed to find the answer to their needs in the unmapped regions opened up by the conflicting civilizations of the modern world. They are searching, whether in conscious quest or merely in ill-defined discontent, for a new and sure way to a better life.

THE OLD PATHWAYS OF PILGRIMAGE

Before we examine this new movement more closely, we may find it helpful to reflect on the custom of pilgrimage as it has shaped the history of the Middle East through recorded time. We recall that this area of the world cradled the earliest beginnings of human civilization and nurtured the development of mankind's highest faiths. It is not surprising then that we can trace the pathways of pilgrimage back to the mists of pagan antiquity.

Mankind seems to have an innate tendency to attach a sense of sanctity to certain special places. Primitive religion has often ascribed a sacred significance to conspicuous features of the natural landscape, such as mountains, springs, and rivers. Hallowed groves of oak or cedar are still to be seen crowning hilltops in Palestine and

Lebanon. These are the "high places" of ancient worship that once were thought to be the particular dwellings of the local gods. Through the ages men and women have journeyed as pilgrims to such points, in supplication and appeasement, offering their sacrifices and dedicated gifts, seeking from the deities some benefit or bounty.

The observance of pilgrimage is not only a manifestation of primitive religion. It has an honored position likewise in the rites of the higher faiths. Hebrew religious practice ultimately centralized the ceremonial worship of God in the Jerusalem temple and earnest believers went up to the city for the three main festivals of the year—the Passover, the Feast of Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles. Psalms 120 to 134 were part of the ritual of this ancient pilgrimage. Called "songs of ascents," they reflected the religious fervor of the people as they took the upward roads to the Holy City.

> I was glad when they said to me
> "Let us go to the house of the Lord!"
> Our feet have been standing within your gates,
> O Jerusalem!

Thus did the old psalmist express the exultation in the heart of the pilgrim as his weary feet crossed the threshold of the city gates. In the life of Jesus, there are repeated instances of his participation in these traditional Hebrew pilgrimages (Luke 2:41-42; John 5:1; 7:1-10; 12:12-13).

Christianity has never made the practice of pilgrimage

an article of doctrine or an established custom. Jesus himself emphasized that God may be worshiped everywhere if he is worshiped "in spirit and in truth." After the Resurrection, Christian believers were sure that the living Christ could be found on every road and in every place. Nevertheless there has always been a strong impulse in the heart of Christians to walk the paths of Palestine where Jesus walked. Bethlehem and Nazareth, the shores of Galilee and the courtyards of Jerusalem, hallowed by their sacred associations with the life of our Lord, have made Palestine inevitably a Holy Land for every Christian and a place of pilgrimage for many.

Pilgrimage has been observed in Islam more than in any other religion. The Prophet Muhammad grew up in Mecca, a center of pilgrimage connected with the religious customs of Arabian paganism. After he had established his new monotheistic faith, Muhammad reinterpreted the old traditions of pilgrimage, making Mecca the focal point of Islamic observance. The pilgrimage to Mecca is one of the five pillars of faith and a devout Muslim is expected to go to that city at least once during his lifetime.[1]

However, the religious life of the common people throughout the Middle East does not direct itself primarily to the great central cities of pilgrimage. It is more

[1] The other fundamental prescribed religious duties are the confession of faith that "there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the apostle of Allah," the five stated daily prayers, the observance of fasting in the month of Ramadan, and almsgiving.

vitally connected to local shrines, such as the tomb of a holy man belonging to the district or a wayside place of prayer dedicated to some local patron saint. Even today both Muslim and Christian villagers near the beautiful spring of Afka in Lebanon hold this fountain of waters in veneration and engage in a superstitious act of devotion by tying ribbons to the tree beside the spring.

The late Rev. J. Stewart Crawford of the American University in Beirut was on a hilltop near Mount Hermon in southern Syria not many years ago. His companion, a local Muslim villager, showed him a rock-enclosed sanctuary in a grove of trees. When Mr. Crawford questioned the Muslim as to why the altar was not placed in the direction of Mecca, he answered, "Here the people pray to the god of this place."

In many parts of the Middle East both Christianity and Islam have superimposed only a thin veneer of religious understanding on the ancient animistic beliefs.

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF PILGRIMAGE

A pilgrimage may be defined as a journey made with the intent of reaching a goal that is invested with ultimate value. Unlike a journey for business, pleasure, or adventure, it is primarily a search for the highest good. The pilgrim, usually in company with others of like mind, has a yearning to identify and recognize and understand the reality and nature of the highest good. It

is the pilgrim's active purpose to relate himself to the truth more directly, with a new and vital dedication.

The famous Plymouth settlers of 1620 knew the kind of community they wanted—one in which they would be free to worship God as they saw fit—but as Pilgrims, they did not know what precise route would bring them to their goal. The peoples of the Middle East can also picture the good community in which they would like to live, but they are in the same perplexity as to the right road to follow. The Pilgrims of Plymouth derived their name from the description in Hebrews 11:13-16 of those who as "strangers and pilgrims on the earth . . . seek . . . a better country." (King James version) The Biblical description has a similar relevancy for today's pilgrims in the Middle East.

WHAT SHALL BE THE WAY OF THE NEW PILGRIMAGE?

Many of the old pathways of pilgrimage still beckon to the devout believer or the seeker who wonders if religion may have the answers to the problems of life. But more conspicuous today is the material quest of the Middle Eastern peoples. Under the pressure of new ideas, the common people—as never before—are engaged in an anguished journey out of their old poverty, ignorance, and oppression. They want human dignity, and freedom, and well-being, for themselves and their brothers. They are ready for a revolutionary change. This

change may be gradual and peaceful, if such methods promise real results, or it may become sudden and violent as the people wrench off the shackles of the past.

This quest for a better life on all levels of being—spiritual and material—is an age old desire of the human heart. Today, however, it is going forward at a pace and on a scale never before known in the Middle East. Only the sequel of history will reveal whether the pilgrims of this era achieve from their hardships a new understanding of the deeper dimensions of human destiny, a new finding of self, which are often a signal result of the practice of pilgrimage.

In the chapters that follow, we shall examine this new pilgrimage in more detail. But if we are to reach a real understanding of what is taking place in the Middle East, we must realize that we are not merely outside observers. Indeed, in today's world we are all involved in this great pilgrimage. If we are to participate with understanding and constructive help, we must consciously share with the Middle Eastern peoples in their quest. We must be truly fellow pilgrims, reaching out our hands in the darkness of present perplexities to our brothers in the Middle East, in order that their faces may turn with ours toward the true and guiding light.

CHAPTER 1

Along the Line of March

SEVERAL YEARS AGO WHEN I WAS DRIVING ACROSS THE ROLLing desert from Aleppo to Deir-ez-Zor in northern Syria, a number of black goats-hair tents of a Bedouin encampment came into view. There were a few camels and donkeys nearby, but the only human being was a boy about ten years old who was standing close to the road. He was a forlorn looking little chap with dirty clothes and a ragged headcloth. "There may be plenty of advancement in the big cities of Aleppo, Damascus, and Beirut," I thought, "but here is the old, changeless Orient, untouched by Western influence." Then just as I rode past the little boy, out of his mouth came a big pink balloon of bubble gum. I drove on, reflecting that the "refinements" of Western civilization had certainly penetrated even into the farthest recesses of the ancient Middle East!

The incident has seemed to me to be symbolic of the recent spread of modern influences in this historic area.

The "unchanging East" has vanished. The peoples of Middle Eastern lands have struck their tents and taken to the highways of progress. Reminders of the past keep crowding into the experiences of the present, but this ancient land has literally been catapulted into the midst of twentieth century civilization. Whereas the scientific advance in the Western world was a gradual development, the Middle East has been forced to overleap whole stages of progress. It has had to jump almost at once from an old, slow moving, nearly medieval social order into the complicated technology, the complex political and international relationships, and the rapidly evolving social order of the modern world.

Nowhere is this sharply etched contrast more striking than in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where the camel caravan still plods across the trackless desert wastes but is giving way, almost without the intervening stages of horse carriage, motor car, and railway train, to the modern airplane. Suddenly out of the date palm groves and mud-walled villages of the Arabian oasis has arisen the fantastic machinery of the modern oil industry and the buildings, and ways of life of the Western world.

THE SIMPLE VILLAGE AND THE COMPLEX CITY

Most of the people of the Middle East live in small, compact villages—on fertile alluvial plains or arid upland plateaus, in green river valleys or on rugged mountain

slopes, by the seaside or on the fringes of the desert. Their houses are built of stone or mud bricks or palm leaf mats. They are farmers and tenders of livestock. The majority in many countries are still illiterate.

Increasing numbers of people, however, are migrating to the rapidly growing cities. These cities represent a tremendous advance in standards and styles of living over the still primitive conditions of the average village. The capital city of each country, in particular, has become a concentrated center of business and government; of industry and medical facilities; of wealth and social life; of culture and learning. One of the most pressing needs in the Middle East today is the extension of the advantages of city life to the myriad villages across the land.

The immediacy of this problem to Middle Easterners is illustrated by the comments of an Iranian newspaper editor. After a visit to the United States, he was asked what had impressed him most. He replied, "The typical little crossroads town in Kansas, because its standard of life, its stores and schools and homes are not essentially different from or inferior to what I found in New York or Washington."

WHAT IS THE MIDDLE EAST?

The Middle East covers a wide stretch of the earth's territory on three different continents, spanning at least five thousand miles of latitude from Morocco to Paki-

stan, and more than two thousand miles of longitude from Turkey to the Sudan. The Explanatory Foreword lists the regions that are usually included in a broad definition of this area.

Increasingly in the sixth decade of the twentieth century the Middle East has become an important focus of world interest and attention. There are four primary reasons for this importance: the geographical position of the Middle East at the crossroads of three continents; the phenomenal resources of oil; political problems and alignments; and the historical role the region plays in the world's religions. Geography, geology, politics, and religion are bound together to make the Middle East an area that the rest of the world cannot safely ignore, an area that is destined to play an important part in the future as it has in the past ages of human history.

However, the Middle East is more than a geographical entity, it is also an aggregate of 185 million people. It is almost impossible to describe these people except in a general way. There are too many contrasts, too great a diversity. There are many different races and a wide variety of dialects. In short, there is no average or typical Middle Easterner.

Let us for a moment sit down in the lobby of one of Beirut's modern hotels and observe the passers-by. Here are a band of university students, with open-collared shirts, conversing in a mixture of Arabic, English, and French. A prosperous looking group of men wearing

Western suits may be businessmen or government officials. Over in the corner a tall, bearded man in flowing robes, with a white headcloth held in place by several rounds of heavy black cord, is perhaps a member of the ruling family of Kuwait. Several smartly dressed young women stroll past our chairs, animatedly discussing in Arabic the latest Paris fashions. Contrasting dully with the gay apparel of the women, khaki uniforms of Lebanese army officers can be seen here and there about the lobby.

Outside in the street are a group of laughing women in colorful long dresses—Kurds from northern Syria or eastern Turkey who have come to Beirut to earn a larger income than would be theirs at home. Men in checked red and white headcloths may be Palestinian refugees—but so are the lawyer and the head of an accounting firm, friends of the author, who are talking in the lobby and are indistinguishable from other Western-dressed business and professional men.

Cadillacs and tiny Volkswagens mingle in the street traffic with a rickety vegetable pushcart and a gaudy handwagon from which a white-coated young man vociferously sells ice cream bars and popsicles. A tall Sudanese Negro in a long white garment resembling a nightgown hawks roasted peanuts on the corner. Across the street the tattoo of compressed-air drills and the grinding noise of a concrete mixer are punctuated by the shouts of blue-shirted construction workers.

Throughout the Middle East one finds the same mixture of European dress and oriental fashion, of modern architecture and ancient mud-walled buildings, of Western customs and Eastern tradition.

Language is another factor of diversity across the broad span of the Middle East. For many years the one clear-cut common factor in the thirteen widespread regions listed in the foreword was the Arabic script, which was used for the Turkish, Persian, and Urdu languages as well as for Arabic. Turkey, however, among many other modern reforms following upon the establishment of the republic in 1923, changed the script of the Turkish language from Arabic to roman characters (1928). A similar reform has been discussed in academic circles in Iran, but no change has taken place, due largely to the reluctance of Iranians to give up the traditional script form of their world famous Persian literature. In West Pakistan, although English is widely used, the official language is Urdu, written in the Arabic script. Today the people of Cyprus use the Greek language predominantly, together with Turkish in roman characters. Modern Hebrew is the official language in Israel. A majority of the Ethiopian people speak Amharic.

THE ARAB WORLD

The thirteen Middle East regions listed in the foreword include the non-Arab countries of Pakistan, Turkey, Iran, Cyprus, Ethiopia, and Israel. All the other

enumerated countries, from the Atlantic shores of Morocco to the southeastern tip of Arabia that thrusts into the Indian Ocean, are part of the Arab world, are predominantly Arab in language and culture, and constitute an area with a strong psychological sense of unity and common interest. It should be noted that, contrary to popular conception, many Arabs are not Muslims. The term "Arab" refers primarily to a linguistic and cultural group, although the religious and historical element of Islam is a strong component in this culture.

Today the Greek language and culture are largely confined to modern Greece, and Roman influence has been absorbed into newer cultures and languages. But the Arab world—many centuries after the downfall and disappearance of the old Arab empire—is still a reality. People dispersed over a dozen countries of North Africa and West Asia share the distinctive Arab self-consciousness. A recent definition says that "The present day Arabs are all those who inhabit the Arab world, speak the Arabic languages, take pride in Arab history, cherish the general Arab feeling, and share in the characteristics of Arab mentality, irrespective of their religious affiliation and their racial descent." [1]

What is often referred to as "the Muslim world" covers a far wider area than the Arab world; indeed Arabs constitute only a relatively small proportion of all

[1] Faris, Nabih A., and Husayn, M. T. *The Crescent in Crisis*. Lawrence, Kan.: University of Kansas Press, 1955. Used by permission.

Muslims. Included in the Muslim world are not only the Arab and non-Arab countries of the Middle East, but Afghanistan and East Pakistan, what has been called "the world's largest minority" of 40 million Muslims in India, and to a large extent various lands of Southeast Asia such as Malaya and Indonesia. The southern Philippine island of Mindanao, considerable parts of China, a wide belt in the southern part of Asiatic Russia, small sections in the Balkans and large parts of East, Central, and West Africa also belong to the Muslim world.

MINORITY PEOPLES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The full picture of the people in the Middle East—and it is the people who are the most important part of any region—is not yet complete. Scattered through almost all the countries of this area are additional groups of people who play an important role in the whole political, cultural, and religious scene. These are the minorities, compact groups of people who differ from the majority population and to some extent retain their own historic and distinctive identity. This may be based on race or religion, language, or a lingering sense of statehood. Some of these groups are mountain or desert tribes. Others are remnants of former nations. Still others are ancient or recent refugees. Together they form a characteristic and important element in the life of most of the countries of the Middle East.

Among the remnants of ancient linguistic and political divisions are the Kurds and other tribes in Iran, Turkey, Iraq, and Syria, and the Berbers in North Africa. The Copts in Egypt and the Greek Orthodox and the Maronites in Lebanon are actually remnants of former "nations," and they also preserve their ancient languages in the liturgy of their churches. The factor of religion adds a major element of distinctiveness to other groups such as the Armenians, the Assyrians (or Nestorian Syrian Christians), and scattered Jewish communities.

There are several very small minority groups in the Middle East that stir the imagination with reminiscences of the past. Among these are the Samaritans, a surviving group of only a few hundred people living in Nablus (near the site of ancient Shechem) in Jordan, and the Zoroastrians, descendants of the early Iranian faith to which the "wise men from the east" or Magi are thought to have belonged. The age-old tradition of fire-worship survives in the symbolic rituals of the ten to twelve thousand Zoroastrians who remain in Iran today.

A new minority are the displaced Palestinian Arab refugees. These are former residents of portions of Palestine who have been encamped in the territories adjacent to their former homes since 1948.

All of these diverse peoples, newly self-conscious and awakened, majority and minority alike, are to be found in the line of march of the great Middle East pilgrimage.

CHAPTER 2

Journey Through the Ages

THE HISTORY OF THE MIDDLE EAST IS FILLED WITH LIGHT and darkness. Great civilizations have flared to power: Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Persian, Roman, Byzantine, Arabian, and Turkish. Between these periods have stretched years of recession and decay.

A century and a half before World War II, Western influence began to stir the Middle East to a slow reawakening of its cultural and political aspirations. A modern Arab historian and novelist, Edward Atiyah, has said, "If any one date is to be chosen as marking the end of this long Arab sleep, it will be the day on which Napoleon set foot on Egyptian soil in 1798. Until that day the Arabs were still living in the Middle Ages. . . . Meanwhile the Europeans . . . had had their Renaissance and Reformation; had discovered the great ocean routes to India and the New World and embarked on their imperial careers all around the globe; they had accomplished the scientific revolution of the seventeenth

century, had had the enlightenment of the eighteenth and were, as Napoleon arrived in Egypt, going through the Industrial and French Revolutions." [1]

Napoleon's stay was short. When he evacuated the eastern Mediterranean lands in 1801, a powerful Albanian officer, Muhammad Ali, took control of affairs in Egypt, nominally for the Ottoman sultan. He encouraged the establishment of education along Western lines, sent students to France to study scientific techniques, and thereby set in motion the beginnings of the Arab revival.

The advent of Protestant Christian missionary efforts in the 1820's spurred the revival. The son of Muhammad Ali, Ibrahim Pasha, as ruler of Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon, welcomed the educational efforts of the Protestant missionaries. French Roman Catholics likewise opened mission schools.

Many Arabs have testified to the contributions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the awakening of the Middle East. Until 1870 the work was a joint project of Congregationalists and Presbyterians. The board stressed the use of the literary Arabic language in its schools and pioneered in setting up an Arabic printing press in Beirut in 1834. The revival of Arabic language and literature, first among Christian groups but then among the larger Muslim population,

[1] Atiyah, Edward. *The Arabs*. Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, Inc., 1955, pp. 73-74. Used by permission.

stimulated a growing renaissance of Arabic culture and pride in the Arab heritage.

George Antonius, telling the story of the growth of Arab nationalism, pays this tribute to the work of the American Protestant missionaries: "The educational activities of the American missionaries in that early period had, among many virtues, one outstanding merit: they gave the pride of place to Arabic, and, once they had committed themselves to teaching in it, put their shoulders with vigor to the task of providing an adequate literature. In that, they were the pioneers; and because of that, the intellectual effervescence which marked the first stirrings of Arab revival owes most to their labours." [2]

THE BIRTH OF ARAB NATIONALISM

At first the new sparks of Arab nationalism were tended by literary societies, especially in Lebanon. Before long these grew into secret political movements throughout the Arab world.

Meanwhile, the Ottoman empire was losing its hold in the Middle East. The French thrust into Algeria in 1830. Greece won its war of independence in 1829. The British seized Aden in 1839 and gradually established limited control over most of the sheikhdoms and prin-

[2] Antonius, George. *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement.* Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1939, p. 43. Used by permission.

ipalities around the coasts of Arabia, on the Indian)cean, and in the Persian Gulf. France took possession f Tunisia in 1881. The British established a virtual rotectorate over Egypt in 1882 (strengthening it in 914) and leased Cyprus in 1878. In 1899 Anglo-Egyp- an control of the Sudan was established. Italy invaded ibyan Tripolitania and the French assumed an uneasy rotectorate over Morocco in 1911. Germany gained no erritory at the expense of the Ottoman Turks, but took leading position in their economic affairs.

THE DREAM OF ARAB INDEPENDENCE

When World War I broke out, Turkey joined Ger- iany and the other Central Powers. The Allies pro- eeded to woo the people most interested in throwing ff the Turkish yoke—the Arabs. The ruler of Mecca, the harif Husain, was the key Arab leader with whom the ritish made contact and to whom they made promises f postwar independence. The result was the Arab Revolt gainst Turkey in 1916, which did much to produce an llied victory in the Middle East.

The war stirred the Arabs with dreams of independ- nce. One vision took the form of a single Arab country ast of Suez, although there was then no Arab leader- hip capable of commanding the broad allegiance neces- ary for the creation of a unified nation. The Arab peo- les, nevertheless, took the promises of Great Britain in ood faith and looked forward to the end of the war and

the final defeat of Turkey with tremendous hope and enthusiasm.

PALESTINE—THE "MUCH-PROMISED" LAND

During the same years when Great Britain was offering promises of independence to the Arabs, however, other British and French interests were at work. In 1916 a secret pact (the Sykes-Picot Agreement) was made by Britain and France, and later approved by Tsarist Russia. The agreement compromised the conflicting ambitions of the European powers by dividing the former Ottoman territories into spheres of influence. An international regime was suggested for most of Palestine. Only an adjoining stretch of marginal or desert land in eastern Syria, western Iraq, Transjordan, and Arabia was left for an Arab confederation.

Then, in 1917, the British came out with the Balfour Declaration which favored the hope of Zionists for the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine.

Zionism, the movement to establish a refuge for scattered and persecuted Jewish people, arose following the Russian pogroms in 1882. Although Zionists from time to time considered other areas of the world as possibilities for colonization, Palestine—the home of the Hebrew people in their most historic period—was always the main objective of Zionist hopes.

The Sykes-Picot Agreement, which was made public

in 1917, and the Balfour Declaration were clearly irreconcilable with the promises made to the Arabs to get their military support. They created in the Arab mind a deep distrust of the Western world.

It can be said for the British diplomatic maneuvers of these years that Great Britain was fighting for her life. The fact remains that the diplomacy created a chaos of frustration and bitterness that have not yet been healed.

THE MANDATES IN A DIVIDED ARAB WORLD

The end of World War I certainly brought no lasting peace to the Middle East. Instead of gaining independence, the Arabs saw their lands divided into mandates which appeared to be little more than the replacement by European colonialism of the old Ottoman imperialism. Lebanon and Syria became French mandates, and Palestine and Transjordan were mandates under the British. (Transjordan was originally a part of the Palestine mandate.) Farther east, Iraq was made yet another British mandate.

The one independent Arab kingdom established after World War I was that of Sharif Husain in the Hejaz section of Western Arabia. Husain, it will be remembered, was the former ruler of Mecca to whom the British had promised independence in return for support against the Turks. Husain succumbed to the rising power of King Ibn Saud, of the Nejd in Central Arabia, who by

1925 succeeded in unifying the whole of the Arabian Peninsula, forming what is today known as Saudi Arabia. Only Yemen in the southeast, and the British-protected circle of coastline principalities from Aden around to Kuwait, are not included in Saudi Arabia.

Aroused by their treatment by the European powers, Arab nationalists rallied new support and gained in strength. Gradually their efforts made many of the protectorates and mandates in the Middle East untenable. Egypt was freed from British control in 1922, although British military occupation continued in Cairo and Alexandria until a new treaty of alliance in 1936. During World War II, Egypt was again a British armed camp, and some troops remained in the Suez Canal Zone until 1956. Iraq became independent in 1932. Syria and Lebanon wrenched themselves free from French control during the second world war and the progress of independence, declared in 1941, was completed in 1946. Jordan gained its independence in 1946. The latest modifications in the map of shrinking colonial empires and expanding national states in the Middle East are Pakistan (1947), Libya (1952), the Sudan, Tunisia, and Morocco (1956).

Turkey and Iran have continued their independent nationhood, but various phases of opposition to the West have been in evidence in these lands, also. Nationalistic revolt is continuing in Algeria and Cyprus. Discontent is found even in such British-protected prin-

cipalities as Oman on the shores of the Persian Gulf and in southern Arabia. Throughout the Middle East, nationalists campaign against foreign commercial, economic, political, and military influences.

THE CRUCIAL QUESTION OF PALESTINE

It is in Palestine that the clash of interests in the Middle East since 1917 has been most severe and has had the widest repercussions. The conflict not only has been an engagement between colonial interest and the vigorous self-assertion of a would-be or newly independent state. It has also been a clash between contrary nationalisms.

The hope of Zionism for a national home became a political reality as a result of several factors, of which the Balfour Declaration is paramount. The vague and even self-contradictory phrases of the Declaration played so important a part that it should be recorded in full:

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil or religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the right and political status enjoyed by the Jews in any other country."

The emphasis on the civil rights of the "existing non-

Jewish communities" (Arabs made up nine-tenths of the population at that time) seemed to imply that "a home for the Jewish people" meant simply a place of refuge for hard-pressed victims of European persecution without prejudice to the people already living in Palestine. But use of "national" with the equivocal word "home" encouraged some Zionists to hope for the ultimate establishment of a sovereign, territorial, and political "Jewish" state. Despite British statements that the word "home" did not mean a separate state, Zionist hopes were not entirely quenched, even though Arab fears were for the time allayed.

Perhaps the Palestine question would have been solved with only a relatively small continuing Jewish immigration. But Nazi persecution of Jews in Europe before and during World War II aroused an anxious support for Zionist plans throughout world Jewry. The outraged humanitarian compassion of many nations produced a forgetfulness of Arab rights. Indeed, many Europeans and Americans knew little of what Palestine was like in 1947. They were unaware that it was a semi-barren territory the size of Vermont and the home of more than a million and a half people—at least four times the population of Vermont.

Perhaps the Arab people of Palestine would have been willing, under ordinary circumstances, to receive their share of refugees. But they could not understand why a separate state should be carved out of their territory on

behalf of these refugees. Arab spokesmen insist that no sovereign nation would allow a group of refugees to alienate the ground on which they were allowed to settle and make it a separate state. Nor could Arabs understand why their country of Palestine should be singled out to make the sacrifices demanded by the conscience of the West for the Western world's persecution of the Jewish people. Moreover, the Arabs felt that colonial pressures were to blame for having kept Palestine from independence, and thus without a national government to safeguard its territory.

The Arabs of the Middle East could never bring themselves to believe that the Western powers would not fulfill their promises—both those of the British and those implied in the principle of self-determination contained in the Covenant of the League of Nations. (Even by 1947 the Arabs made up more than two thirds of the population of Palestine.)

On the other side, the growing Jewish population of Palestine could not understand the Arab hostility. Many of them were survivors of the outrages in Europe; they felt that a national haven of refuge was a small enough consolation for their sufferings.

PARTITION, WAR, AND REFUGEES

Despite strong Arab protests, the United Nations decreed the partition of Palestine and, simultaneously with the British withdrawal, the state of Israel came into be-

ing, May 15, 1948. Even before that date terrorism and sporadic guerrilla fighting resulted in the flight of hundreds of thousands of Arab residents. On the proclamation date armies from the surrounding Arab countries marched into the area to prevent partition. During the war that followed, Israel occupied additional territory, and many more thousands of non-combatant Arab Palestinians fled from the area. Altogether, upwards of seven hundred thousand Palestinian Arabs were driven from their homes. This number almost equals total Jewish immigration to Palestine from Europe between 1917 and 1957. The number of Arabs now being cared for by the United Nations Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees has increased to more than nine hundred thousand.

After 1948 an uneasy truce settled over the area, occasionally disturbed by border clashes. Violence flared in October, 1956, when Israel entered the Sinai Peninsula. Only a few days later British and French military forces invaded Egypt. Under United Nations pressure the British and French withdrew in December, 1956, but it was not until three months afterward that all of the Israeli troops departed. Neither the Israeli nor the Anglo-French campaign did more than further complicate the Palestine problem and intensify the anti-colonial, anti-Western, and anti-Zionist attitudes of the Arab people.

At the heart of the problem of Palestine are the nine

hundred thousand Arab refugees scattered in the territories surrounding their homeland. The United Nations' relief agency has labored manfully to provide minimum food rations, essential medical care, and some educational and social services to this vast group. But their continuing status as homeless exiles remains the most poignant feature of the situation in the Middle East in the 1950's.

A bright spot in this dark situation has been the help given by many church groups and voluntary agencies in a wide variety of relief services. Outstanding in this work has been the activity of the Protestant Christian churches of the world. Their efforts have been coordinated under the Relief Work Committee of the Near East Christian Council. One of its main sources of support has been the One Great Hour of Sharing conducted in the American churches.

The far-reaching consequences of this relief effort was illustrated during a discussion of the refugee situation by a group of Arabs in Beirut. One of them said, "It is not their suffering that matters so much as the fact that no one seems to care." But another spoke up, "Wait a minute. We have seen the activities of relief sponsored by the Christian churches. There must be someone who does care." Refugee relief workers, however, are themselves the first to say that a more constructive remedy than relief services is necessary. The United Nations relief agencies and voluntary groups are unable to pro-

vide a real solution to the needs of this large group of misused people.

The United Nations after the war in 1948 passed several resolutions directed toward the permanent solution of the refugee problem. It has not been possible to put these resolutions, which deal with repatriation, compensation, and the internationalization of Jerusalem, into effect without the agreement of both Israel and the Arab countries. The responsibility for negotiating a full, permanent peace settlement still rests with the United Nations and with the leadership of the member nations.

Many persons well acquainted with the situation in the Middle East believe that no final peaceful solution will be found until Israel is willing to make restitution or to give up at least part of the territory taken by force of arms in 1948 and 1949, thus allowing some of the Palestinian refugees to return to their homes. Modifying the dream of a "national home" for Jewish people from all over the world is probably necessary, too. The "open door" policy of unlimited immigration is unrealistic in relation to the narrow confines of territory to which Israel can properly lay claim. Moreover, dreading further loss of territory, the Arabs regard the policy as a dangerous and provocative factor.

Dr. Kenneth Cragg has written recently, "If Israel is not to remain a kind of national ghetto, she must find a means of co-existence with the Arabs. If the Arabs are ever to recover from the Arab tragedy of Israel, they

must make terms with it. Otherwise their future will be perpetually mortgaged to their past . . . there have been few issues in our time more charged with emotion, more confused by competing interests than 'Palestine. . . .'" [3]

Only substantial compromises by Israel, the Arab states, and the other member nations of the United Nations can now produce an even partially satisfactory peace settlement. Probably the opinion of the people of the United Nations will ultimately be responsible for failure or success. Dr. Ralph Bunche, U. N. mediator for Palestine in 1948-49, wrote these words following his work there: "The Near East . . . will remain a dangerous spot until much more progress toward a peaceful settlement of the differences between the Arab states and Israel has been made than is the case today. I feel that the main obstacle to moving beyond the uneasy armistice stage which now prevails is the Arab refugee problem. I do not in any sense feel that it is an insoluble problem, but I feel that it will take some effort of a much more concentrated nature than has been attempted during the past year by the United Nations." [4] These words may be underlined as still notably applicable in 1958.

[3] Cragg, Kenneth. *The Call of the Minaret*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1956, p. 196. Used by permission.
[4] Frye, Richard N. (ed.). *The Near East and the Great Powers*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951, p. 73. Used by permission.

THE JOURNEY BECOMES A PILGRIMAGE

The journey of the Middle East through the ages has come to a confusing crossroads. The Middle Eastern peoples today yearn for the abundant life, for economic progress, for political stability, for individual freedom. Their struggle to realize their dreams is complicated by anti-colonial, anti-Western emotions and Palestine is the natural focus of suspicion and bitterness. Here is symbolized in every Arab mind the imperialistic interference of the West; the making of promises based on self-interest rather than justice; the disregard of the elemental fairness that would be expected to emerge from Western ideals.

In terms of the historical background, therefore, it does not seem surprising that Middle Eastern nations and their leaders should grasp at any available weapons in their struggle for independence. They flirt with Russia, obtain armaments from Communist countries, nationalize such symbols of colonial control as the Suez Canal Company, and impose stumbling blocks to Western commerce. Such activities are by-products of the Arab sense of injustice created by the actions of the West in their dealings with Palestine.

Dr. Costi K. Zurayk, more recently acting president of the American University of Beirut, as early as 1951 wrote these prophetic words: "Since the Zionist danger

is uppermost in their minds [the Arabs], and everything else seems secondary in comparison with it, they will increasingly deviate from the West and turn to the East, unless a dramatic reversal is effected in Western policy with regard to the Arab-Zionist conflict." [5]

Palestine is the crux of the all-absorbing "colonial issue" in the Middle Eastern mind, and the colonial issue influences every effort toward internal progress.

[5] Young, T. Cuyler (ed.). *Near Eastern Culture and Society*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951, p. 218. Used by permission.

CHAPTER 3

Roadways of the New Pilgrimage

THE PATH OF THE MIDDLE EAST PILGRIMAGE IS UNCERTAIN. Many an Arab, for example, sees before him one route garlanded with the false promises of communism and another that offers the dominating companionship of the powers of the West. "The Middle Easterner fears both, and he is determined to create his own way of life, both culturally and politically." [1]

The route of the pilgrimage will be affected by the Middle East itself—by the characteristics that unify it and by those that divide it.

COMMON FACTORS IN THE LIFE OF THE MIDDLE EAST

There are many characteristics common to the Middle East, despite the vastness of its territory and the diversities of its people, geography, customs, and history.

[1] Fisher, Sydney Nettleton (ed.). *Social Forces in the Middle East.* Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1955, dust jacket. Used by permission.

The Influence of the West

The most conspicuous feature of the Middle East today is the accomplished invasion of its life by the Western world. This is not measured simply by the teeming automobile traffic, the modern fourteen-story skyscrapers, and the brightly lighted shop windows of the capital cities. Products and pressures from the West have penetrated almost every phase of life.

Although a Western visitor in the Middle East may not be aware of the primitive conditions and the relative lack of scientific progress in many places, he is sure to note the mammoth new housing developments in the outskirts of Cairo, the magnificent airport terminal of Beirut, a modern glass factory set down among the olive groves in the suburbs of Damascus, a modern school building beside a flower-bordered traffic circle in Baghdad, and a new soft-drink bottling plant, shining with plate glass, on one of the main avenues of Tehran.

The impact of Western ways upon the Middle East is much deeper, however, than these superficial trappings. It affects the conduct of business, the directions of economic development, the procedures of government, and the expansion of educational, medical, and social services. Moreover, Western thinking is reflected in the minds of Middle Eastern people in their whole view of life, their ethics, philosophy, and religion much more than they may realize or we may suppose.

The breath-taking rapidity with which such complex

changes have taken place means that inevitably many of the new ways are awkwardly used or are even destructive in their effect. But the trend of change appears to be irresistible.

Hand in hand with the eager reception of modern influences from the West has gone a determined opposition to many aspects of Western life. Added to the understandable feelings of inferiority are the antagonisms resulting from exploitation by the West in the not too distant past.

"We like you Americans personally," said a nationalist-minded Arab to me one day, "but we distrust your government and we fear the effect upon our life of your civilization." This anti-Western reaction is a sober reality that we must recognize and deal with wisely in the future.

Nationalism

The old colonial world of Asia and Africa produced the nationalism that pervades the Middle East today. The formula for it is plain:

An underdeveloped country
A pressure of powerful forces from the outside world
A past history of political, commercial, or military control by others
A rising sense of indigenous responsibility, worth, and dignity
A desire to express a developing national consciousness through independent self-government

This formula, which in 1776 produced the American Revolution, is found all over the Middle East in the middle of the twentieth century. Immediately after Iran's nationalization of the oil industry in 1951, an intelligent Iranian friend said to me, "Now we Iranians feel that we can walk down the same side of the street as you Westerners, and it is no longer we who have to step off the sidewalk into the mud."

Tremendous forces operate within the human personality to urge man on to freedom. When, despite the promises for Arab independence after World War I, Great Britain and France moved into the Middle East with their colonial-type mandates, they made a mistake. Edward Atiyah says, "They failed to understand the nature of nationalism or to assess its power. They ignored it as being a frothy agitation made by an insignificant minority. They believed that the mass of the people wanted only an efficient government that would give them security and justice." [2] But instead of security and justice, the deep impulse to liberty has been the more powerful desire.

Nationalism, however, continues to have a formidable rival in local loyalties—which are the only ones that most Middle Easterners and their ancestors in recent centuries have had any opportunity to cherish. The isolated townsman or tribesman may not break into any such tuneful boast as, "Kansas City is my home town," but

[2] Atiyah, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-115.

when reference is made to *his* locality he squares his shoulders with a readier pride than when the larger and less vivid unit of the nation is mentioned. We cannot expect the people of a new nation in the Middle East to develop quickly an intelligent strong loyalty to the nation. When the United States was young, the people of one region often were more concerned with their own local problems than they were with issues affecting the entire country.

Furthermore, the concept of a "nation-state" is foreign to the area, introduced from the West.

The position of the Arab nationalist is also complicated by Pan Arabism, which hopes to create a federated Arab nation or a united states of the Arab world. Many forces, political and economic, seek to pull the separate states into such a larger unity.

Whatever the unit to which the Middle Eastern citizen feels the most loyal, within that unit he desires to be free. Until he is given genuine independence, free from any clinging tentacles of colonial control or feudal oppression, he will not be ready to move out into a larger and more fruitful interdependence of a cooperative world order of the future.

Problems in Attaining Democracy

Only two decades ago a man could draw his finger across the map of the Middle East and touch country after country that was a protectorate, a colony, a man-

date. Today every place on this same map, except Algeria, Cyprus, and the British-protected principalities of the Arabian peninsula, is either fully independent or possesses its own local government to a substantial degree. Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Ethiopia, Libya, and Morocco are monarchies or sultanates with some measure of constitutional limitation. Pakistan, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt, the Sudan, and Tunisia are republics. Several states within the confines of the Arabian peninsula are absolute monarchies, although the recent introduction of a Council of Ministers in Saudi Arabia is regarded as a step toward a more liberal form of government. In the great majority of Middle Eastern countries there exists the form of parliamentary democracy.

In all these countries, however, it is generally acknowledged that democratic government is a long way from success. In most cases the parliamentary form is a façade for the rule of a "head of state" or a controlling oligarchy. The result is far from being truly a government of, by, or for the people. Such factors as a democratic tradition, a well-developed middle class, broadly diffused education, and a sense of community service are essential if a people are to make democracy work. These factors are still largely lacking in the countries of the Middle East. Bribery and corruption are widespread. It is reported that one voter in a recent election in Lebanon refused a ten pound bribe for his vote but took five pounds from another candidate, stating that the more

modest offer of the latter aspirant indicated that he was the more honest!

A frequent result of the breakdown of attempts at democratic government is the military *coup d'état.* The people, when their needs are unmet and their petitions are of no avail, turn to the army in desperation. This has happened more than once in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and temporarily in Lebanon and Iran. The chief difficulty with military government is that it often entrenches itself in power and the desired reforms are not forthcoming.

Israel, with many aspects of its life imported directly from the West, has more nearly than others succeeded in developing a functioning democracy, and provides notable examples of modern social welfare. It has not extended full liberties to its minority peoples, however, and until peaceful relations with its Arab neighbors are established, the influence of its constructive social projects will fail to influence the rest of the Middle East.

Turkey has displayed one of the more hopeful examples of democratic development. In 1950 the country successfully made the transition from a dictatorial one-party government to a two-party regime. The former opposition party peacefully and fairly took over the reins as a result of free elections. It is not certain that these gains have been conserved since then, and Arnold Toynbee may be too optimistic in remarking, "The victory of the Western constitutional spirit in the Turkish elections

of 1950 is thus a landmark which may perhaps even signify a turn of the political tide in the world as a whole." [3]

It is still reasonable to hope that, with greater freedom bringing a more relaxed atmosphere and with the progress of education and social reform, the practice of genuine democracy will continue to grow in the lands of the Middle East.

Underdeveloped Resources

There is widespread poverty among the common people of most of the Middle East. It is due in part to sparse resources of water and the proper combination of minerals needed for heavy industry. But it is also caused by failure to develop the resources that do exist.

Most of the countries of the Middle East have produced a relatively small but conspicuously privileged class of wealthy rulers, landowners, and merchants. The majority of the people have a pitifully low standard of living.

A typical Middle Eastern villager may be described as an illiterate, lean (although seldom starving) tenant farmer, living in a village that is just beginning to be visited by modern scientific civilization. A daily bus may run to the nearest town or city, and the local teahouse probably has a battery-run radio. Western commercial goods in increasing variety are on the shelves of the little

[3] Toynbee, Arnold. *The World and the West.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1953, p. 29. Used by permission.

shops. If our typical villager is lucky, there may be an elementary school, although often not the full six grades, for his children to attend. If he is sick, he can take the bus to a doctor or hospital in the nearest city. The villager possesses advantages well above the average if electricity has come, if agricultural machinery has been introduced, or if a project of community development has brought an artesian well, health services, cooperative organizations, assistance in farming techniques, or a plan of individual land ownership.

In general, however, the masses of the people are not sharing the progress of the modern world. The average per capita income in all except one or two countries of the Middle East is less than $125 a year (compared to about $1,800 in the U.S.A.). The Middle East (not including Pakistan) contains approximately 6 per cent of the world's population, but its generally arid fields yield only 3 per cent of the world's grain production, and its commerce handles only 3 per cent of world trade. It has only 1 per cent of the world's industrial population and manufactures less than 1 per cent of total industrial production.

Economic improvement is taking place and much more is possible, despite the lack of basic resources. There is inadequate stimulus to business activity on the part of governments—or in the form of banks, labor market, insurance facilities, transport, mechanics, and legal protection. Trained technicians and managers are

in short supply. Capital is slow to invest in risk-taking enterprises. Old customs, inequitable land tenure systems, and outmoded codes of law hobble progress.

Gradually, however, many of these difficulties are being overcome. There are tremendous opportunities ahead for the development of the resources of the Middle East.

Social Awareness and Economic Opportunity

It has been said that in many parts of the world conditions are serious, but not hopeless; whereas in the Middle East the conditions are hopeless, but not serious. The Middle Eastern peasant seems to have an infinite capacity for enduring the intolerable, although he is showing a growing sense of impatience and a rising social awareness. He is no longer content to spread his hands, shrug his shoulders, and lift his eyes toward heaven in fatalistic resignation to his appointed lot. He is beginning to be serious—and in some cases hopeful.

Two major obstacles have tended to block the progress of social revolution in the Middle East. (1) One is the group of landowners and influential rich people who control the machinery of government. They show little enthusiasm for passing laws that would reduce their own privileges in order to raise the welfare of the common people. (2) Another is the preoccupation of governments and people with the struggle for independence from colonial domination.

The diversion of popular zeal for reform to criticism

of foreigners often has been encouraged by the ruling class to stave off demands for social improvement. For example, a few years ago, just after the nationalization of the former Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, a group of visiting American journalists were shown around Tehran. When they reached the crowded slums (now considerably improved) in the southern section of the city, where people huddled in caves dug in the clay pits near the brick factories, the Iranian official who was conducting the tour remarked, "There! See the sad plight to which the British oil company has reduced our people!" Occasionally this climate of criticism brews a storm of uncontrolled anti-Western demonstrations.

Despite such obstacles, there is an increasing undertow of social awareness among the people, building up a force that will surely be felt. Middle Easterners are coming in contact with the modern world—through newspapers, magazines, radios, cinemas, motor transport and airplanes, D.D.T., and inoculations—and are learning that their condition can be improved. Pioneering projects of social service carried on by Christian missions, the broad impact of American and United Nations technical assistance programs, as well as the agencies of Communist propaganda, have all served to awaken the Middle Easterner to new possibilities.

A commonplace incident mirrors a whole world of change to Middle East observers. Recently a nurse in charge of a mission mother-and-baby clinic in an Iran-

ian city noticed in the clinic waiting room two men, an elderly farmer and a barefoot day laborer, holding infants in their arms and discussing baby foods, vitamins, and discipline problems. Although it was at a season when women were being paid good wages for work in the rice fields, the presence of the men was a victory in itself.

Given conditions of political stability and international peace, great opportunities lie ahead. Coordinated planning, and the utilization of oil revenues and other assets for development should encourage programs of land reform, water resource development, industrial expansion, and social welfare. In case of continued political weakness or of international warfare, more violent and ultimately destructive forms of social revolution may be expected.

The Appeal of Communism

No country in the world today is immune from the temptation and the threat of communism. Especially where there are large numbers of underprivileged people and where educated young people experience the frustration of their ideals, Communist propaganda is sure to have its appeal. The Middle East is a primary target of Communist interest. This is due to its low standards of living, its proximity to Soviet Russia, and its strategic location which, if possessed by the forces of international communism, would assure the domination of both

Asia and Africa. In the face of these facts it is difficult to understand the complacency of the West with regard to the grievances and aspirations of the Middle Eastern nations. Equally perplexing are the blunders of Western policy both in the creation of the Arab-Israel conflict and in neglecting earnest efforts toward a settlement.

It is sometimes thought that the followers of Islam are impervious to the appeal of an atheistic materialism. Although theoretically the dangers of communism should be slight, practically this is not the case. There is, however, a substantial amount of resistance to communism. Many Muslims are aware of its suppression of freedom and the danger of its imperialistic control. Moreover, there is a strong individualism in the Arab, Iranian, Turkish, and Pakistani character. Again, there is no large industrial proletariat and educated Middle Easterners have grown up under the influence of liberal Western ideas that make them tend to be critical of communism's appeal. At the height of Communist influence in Iran in 1953, a well-dressed young man on a crowded main avenue of Tehran taunted an American with the popular Communist-inspired slogan, "Yankee, go home!" He then added in a stage whisper audible at close range, "And take me with you!"

Communist propaganda is active throughout the Middle East, particularly where political instability invites entrance. Hunger, hopelessness, and hatred are its mighty allies. The policies of Western nations with re-

gard to the problems and progress of the Middle East will largely determine whether unredressed grievances, unfulfilled hopes, and unallayed hatreds will open the doors of the Middle East to communism.

The Tradition of Islam

The last of the common factors of the Middle East is the religion and religious tradition of Islam. Almost 90 per cent of the people of the Middle East are Muslims. The exceptions are in the geographical or cultural fringe areas, such as Ethiopia and Cyprus, which have predominantly Christian populations, and Israel, with its people oriented toward their Jewish heritage. Substantial minorities of Muslims live in these three lands, however. Lebanon is in the unique position of having an almost equal balance of Christians and Muslims. In the other lands of the Middle East the proportion of Muslims varies from 85 per cent to almost 100 per cent.

It is difficult to measure the degree of unity imparted to the whole Middle East by Islam. There is no hierarchy or centralized organization, and no counterpart of the World Council of Churches. Nevertheless the tradition of Islam is deeply ingrained in the life of most of the inhabitants. The people of Iraq, Egypt, and North Africa are primarily Arabs and Muslims, and are for the most part only dimly aware of what went on in the world before Muhammad. There has, however, been some resurgence of pride in the pre-Islamic past in re-

cent years, especially in Iran and Egypt. A modern sculpture in the station square in Cairo has been replaced by an old statue of the Pharaoh Ramses the Great which had been lying unattended in the palm groves of ancient Memphis for centuries. The main thoroughfare in front of the station has been renamed Ramses Avenue.

Islam easily identifies itself with political nationalism. And in such a way it has become a rallying point of nationalistic opposition to the West. But endeavors of the sultans of the Ottoman Empire, who were the official caliphs or religious leaders of Islam, to divert their Arab subjects from Arab nationalism by a Pan-Islamic program were for the most part a failure. In fact, no movement in the direction of a Pan-Islamic nationalism has succeeded in recent years. Nevertheless Islam remains a common element of very great importance in the history, culture, and present life of the Middle East.

DIVERSITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

We have listed the common factors in the life of the Middle East, but if it were possible to study in detail each particular country, we would discover numerous exceptions or modifications. Many countries have specific problems related to their historical background, their natural resources, or their current involvement in international politics. Some Middle Eastern nations have been independent longer than others. Some are economically and politically more stable. Some possess a higher

degree of culture and a broader development of education and social services. The extent of westernization varies greatly between such countries as Egypt, Lebanon, or Turkey and some of the relatively untouched regions of the Arabian peninsula. Within each country a sharp contrast in the way people live exists between urban centers and the rural districts. National, religious, and political minorities are of varying importance in the different countries of the Middle East.

Within the larger area of the Middle East, the Arab world—as distinguished from the Muslim world—has a marked atmosphere of unity. The remaining countries, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Israel, and Cyprus, have their own distinctive histories, traditions, languages, elements of culture, and political problems.

Turkey is the one country in the Middle East that appears to have chosen a Western course most definitely. It has disestablished Islam and has set up a secular Western-style democratic state. Until recently the teaching of religion in its schools was forbidden. On the other hand, it has encouraged Islam as a personal faith and has pushed its remaining minority peoples out to the fringes of the national life.

In Iran both Communists and Islamic extremists tried to capitalize on popular anti-foreign emotions during the era of oil nationalization. However, the orientation of the country has continued in the direction of the West.

Pakistan is a modern republic explicitly built on an

Islamic base, but careful attention is at the same time given to the accepted moral and social standards of the wider modern world.

Israel has been too busy with the problems of bare economic existence and national survival to have yet had a fair test of its Western, democratic, and essentially secular national life.

Cyprus, with its four-fifths Greek-speaking population, has turned its main attention upon union with Greece.

Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco have many problems of their own, largely connected with the presence of large numbers of French colonists in the midst of a predominantly Muslim Arab and Berber population. This creates particular difficulties in the case of Algeria, formally accounted to be an integral part of France and possessing no officially acknowledged local leadership. The nationalist struggle there continues and the problem remains unsolved.

The cleavage of interest between the Arab countries (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria) closest to Israel and the Arab country most nearly in the path of Russian pressure, Iraq, was brought to the surface in 1955 by Iraq's adherence to the Baghdad Pact. Besides Iraq, signatories of this pact include Turkey, Great Britain, Pakistan, and Iran. The other Arab countries felt that this alliance of Iraq with non-Arab countries and Great Britain would lead the Middle East back into subjugation to the West and would weaken the Arab opposition

to Israel. Iraq denied these arguments and pointed to its own valid fear of Russia and to the necessity of joining with others in a like position in this "northern tier" organization for defense.

THE PERPLEXITY IN THE MIDDLE EASTERN MIND

The preface to a recent survey of the Middle East contains these words: "A whole generation has thus been left spiritually and politically rudderless in countries which, though superficially they are 'democracies' of Western pattern, have got rid neither of the political stranglehold of the rich nor of the miserable plight of the poor. Finding democracy wanting, the growing middle classes of the region are all fumbling after something to replace it."[4]

There are three principal questions that the Arabs and other Middle Eastern peoples are trying to answer (although the first question is primarily that of the Arabs):

Should Arab loyalty and effort be directed to the single nation-state or to a larger Pan-Arab unity? The Arabs are in the process of wondering just who they are. They are struggling to bring into focus their own conception of what the Arab national entity should be. There is a strong tendency to let the mind drift back to

[4] Royal Institute of International Affairs. *The Middle East; A Political and Economic Survey.* London: Oxford University Press, 2nd ed., reprinted 1955, p. xvi. Used by permission. (Third edition in process.)

the past glories of the great Arab empire of the Middle Ages. But the hard realities of the present, the tensions and rivalries and conflicting interests, tend to destroy such dreams.

In most of the Arab lands, there are many forces of disunity. Dynastic rivalries, personal ambitions of different leaders, and disparity of development in various countries—all tend to emphasize the separate, single nation. At the same time the ideal of a larger union persists and grows, and it is not impossible that increasing bonds of actual cooperation may some day bring the achievement of a larger unified "Arab Nation." Also, wider and more effective cooperation may develop between the Arabs and other nations of the Middle East.

Should the society in Middle Eastern nations be secular, along Western lines, or should it in some way be based upon traditional Islamic foundations? This complicated question expresses the basic perplexity in the Middle Eastern mind, and outlines the chief problem of the Middle East's present pilgrimage.

The great trouble with the conspicuous features of Western life—scientific technology and political democracy—is that they seem to the Middle Easterner to be secular. In his eyes, they appear divorced from any legal and social system that can enforce the spiritual and moral principles of religion. Furthermore, the Middle Easterner is genuinely afraid that embracing the attractive features of Western life means giving up the pre-

cious heritage of his own spiritual culture. Consequently he draws back from wholesale acceptance of the West. He focuses his attention on the traditions of his own society, and studies afresh their Islamic foundations. But here, too, he finds doubt: Are these foundations a sound basis for life amid the complicated forces of the modern world?

Can there be some fruitful combination of the essential features of Middle Eastern and Islamic tradition with the power and progress of the West? Involved in the question is another one: What elements in Islamic tradition are essential? Likewise, which aspects of Western civilization are truly fundamental and life giving? The gowned and turbaned sheikh or mullah, the Western-educated and emancipated intellectual, the Christian missionary or indigenous church leader, and even the "man in the street" in the Middle East are all wrestling with these questions today.

Deep down in his heart, the Middle Easterner believes that religion is involved in discovering which way to go on his pilgrimage. Are there secrets embedded in the insights of primitive religion? Are there valid principles contained in Judaism, the oldest of the Middle East's monotheistic faiths? Does Christianity have the answers? Are the guideposts to be sought in the familiar precincts of Islam?

The Middle Easterner turns his eyes once again toward the old pilgrim routes of religion, recognizing that

the spiritual problems are the truly critical ones. He remembers that Muhammad, returning from battle, told his followers: "You have come back from the lesser to the greater struggle." They asked, "What is the greater struggle, O Messenger of God?" And he replied, "The struggle within."[5]

[5] "The World of Islam," *Life Magazine*, May 9, 1955, p. 92. Used by permission.

CHAPTER 4

The Road to Mecca

RELIGION IS NOT ONLY AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE HISTORY and tradition of the Middle East. It influences strongly national and international politics and is also deeply interwoven into the texture of daily life. Unfortunately it often takes the form of a merely habitual or verbal piety. To the believing Muslim, everything is entirely in the hands of God for immediate and constant administration. Thus it is widely regarded as bad luck to say anything definite about the future. A friend of mine ran into this attitude when he was returning from a fishing trip in the Alborz Mountains. He was picked up by a passing car about fifty miles from Tehran. When he asked the driver, "How long will it take to get to Tehran?" the reply was, "What God wills!" When my friend pressed him, "Yes, but about how long does it usually take?" he learned nothing more than "As long a time as God ordains!" Since the future is in God's hands, it is regarded as bad luck to talk about it.

VARIETIES OF RELIGIOUS FAITH

The population of the entire span of the Middle East under our survey is about 185 million. Of these more than 160 million are adherents of some form of the religion of Islam. There are 10 or 12 million pagan or partially Christianized African tribespeople in South Sudan and Ethiopia who belong more properly to a study of Africa than of the Middle East. Likewise Ethiopia has about five million people who are adherents of the Church of Ethiopia, which is similar in doctrine and tradition to the Coptic Church of Egypt. There are between one and two million Copts and other Christians in Egypt, four hundred thousand Greek Orthodox Christians in Cyprus, two hundred thousand Christians in West Pakistan. And almost a million and a half Christians of all varieties live in the other countries of the Middle East, not including Europeans.

Population statistics from many parts of the Middle East are often unreliable and must be considered only as approximations. It has been said that census-takers, especially in rural districts, are met with surprisingly different estimates, depending upon whether taxation and military conscription are in prospect or some kind of government benefits are to be distributed!

There are now almost two million Jews in Israel, and scattered groups of Jewish citizens in other Middle Eastern lands, totaling perhaps 200,000 to 250,000. Large

migrations of Jewish people from Iraq and Yemen have taken place since 1948, together with substantial groups from North Africa, Turkey, and Iran. At this time the number of Jewish people in the Middle East outside Israel is probably somewhat less than the number who have emmigrated from these regions to Israel since 1948. Despite the enmity of Arab countries toward Israel, citizens of Jewish faith have in many cases continued undisturbed in Arab lands. This was true for the most part in Egypt until the Israeli invasion in 1956.

Judaism is a non-missionary religion, currently troubled by the debate throughout the world between Zionists and non-Zionists. The question is whether Judaism is a form of political nationalism connected with the state of Israel or a religious faith and culture held by loyal citizens of the countries in which they live. Except for the general contribution of its historic religious principles, Judaism does not enter into the present pilgrimage of the Middle Eastern peoples.

The same comment may be made about the small "pockets" of separate and different religions that lie outside the actual bounds of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. There are now less than two hundred members of the Samaritan colony in Palestine. The Yezidis and Sabians (or Mandaeans), who live chiefly in Iraq, number about fifty thousand and five thousand respectively. There are some ten to twelve thousand Zoroastrians remaining in Iran.

THE ROAD TO MECCA

Every alert Christian in the modern world should have at least a basic understanding of Islam. Like the modern pilgrim to Mecca who, disdaining the old laborious routes of travel in favor of the airplane, flies high above the ancient sun-baked trails and wayside caravansaries of Arabia, this book has time only for a few "aerial photographs" of the life of Muhammad and of Islam.

Although Islam is based on a person in history, the Muslim does not like his religion to be called Muhammadanism. He denies that Muhammad was more than a human channel for revelations from the One and Only God, Allah. The accepted term is Islam, an Arabic word meaning "submission." The believer, "the one who submits" is a Muslim or, as commonly but less correctly pronounced, Moslem. The words are laws of Allah, put into the heart of the man Muhammad and recited by him, forming the book called the Koran (or more accurately transliterated, *Qur'an*). Muhammad, looked upon by the Muslims as the final prophet and reciter of the final book, is the central figure of Islam: military commander, religious leader, community administrator.

THE CAREER OF MUHAMMAD

Muhammad was born about A.D. 570 in Mecca, the religious center of pagan Arabia. He was forty years old when he had an experience in which he believed that

the angel Gabriel appeared with a message from God and a call to apostleship. Muhammad became a prophet with an intense, single-minded conviction of the truth that there is only one God—Allah. He also believed that man cannot reach his highest moral and spiritual capacity while bound down to the pagan conception of a multitudes of deities and to an idolatrous devotion at their shrines. Muhammad was convinced that the One God had chosen him as the channel of revelation; that his inspired recitations were the reproduction of the very words of God existing in heaven; and that obedience to this divinely revealed law on the part of men was the one means of escaping from the terrors of future judgment.

At first Muhammad was, like other prophets, without honor in his own country. His migration or *hijrah* from Mecca to Medina in the year 622 was the turning point in his career. In Medina he was recognized not only as a prophet but as a civil ruler and military commander. The community of Muslims became an organized state. After the new community had developed, Muhammad decided to remake Mecca into the center of Muslim monotheistic worship and pilgrimage. Ultimately, the Meccans joined their force and their faith with Muhammad. The greater part of Arabia also had been conquered and convinced by the time of the Prophet's death in the year 632, and plans were already laid for northward expansion.

MUHAMMAD'S CHOICE

The crucial decision of Muhammad's career turned on the question that faces every prophet or religious leader, namely, "How does he insure that his divine vision becomes a reality in the world and in the life of men?" Muhammad understood enough of Judaism and Christianity to know that their prophets had succeeded both by the production of sacred books and by the establishment of ongoing communities. He felt himself sufficiently inspired with God's message to create a book. But the decisive problem was the assurance of a community in which the message would be embodied.

Only one way, finally, seemed to Muhammad to offer assured success. This was to form a community with an authoritative control that would actually compel man's obedience; a society ruled by divine law, backed up by the power of military enforcement. It is significant that the Muslim calendar (A.H., meaning the year of the *hijrah*) dates not from the birth of the prophet, but from the founding of the Islamic state.

Muhammad was persuaded that men must believe in One God, must learn of God's will and law, must obey this law and submit to this will. They must, therefore, in the final analysis be made to, for they are too weak and unreliable to be trusted "on their own." This position determined the course of the new religion.[1]

[1] Consult Cragg, *op. cit.*, p. 93, for a helpful discussion of this subject.

As a result Muhammad founded a religion and a state —a religion bound up with the state. From the beginning in Medina and through the centuries of Islamic history, the hope and attempt has been to incorporate the law of God in the governments of men.

Although Muhammad recognized the weakness of men and the consequent need of a ruling authority, the fact is that the men who rule are also weak. This is the fatal flaw in every dictatorship. Much so-called Christian history, as well as Islamic history, demonstrates that when the church and the state are linked, the church and its divine message are dragged down by man's weakness to the levels of earth.

THE EXPANSION OF THE ARAB EMPIRE

The success of the new Muslim community was spectacular. Two years after Muhammad's death the Muslim Arab armies had united the Arabian peninsula, and had forced their way into the nearest provinces of the Byzantine and Persian empires. A little more than ten years later Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Iraq, and most of Iran had been overrun, the Persian empire was destroyed, and the Byzantine empire was seriously weakened, even though its capital city of Constantinople remained for many centuries unconquered. It was in 732, just a century after Muhammad's death, that the farthest westward advance of the Arabs was halted at Tours, in France.

During the next six hundred years Damascus and then Baghdad were the capitals of the rising, ruling, and slowly declining Arab empire. The imperial government had broken into fragments by the time the Mongols destroyed Baghdad in 1258, the date that marks the end of the Arab empire. Two hundred years later, after western Asia had only partially recovered from the devastations of Genghis Khan and Timur Lang (Tamerlane), the expanding power of the Ottoman Turks asserted itself by the conquest of Constantinople in 1453.

During the Dark Ages in Europe it was the Arab civilization that did much to conserve and promote the learning of the ancient world.[2]

DIVERSITY OF ALLEGIANCE TO ISLAM

Islam early suffered division into factions and sects.[3] These various sects are an important element in Islamic life. Perhaps more important than these historic branches of Islam, however, are the diverse levels of faith among Muslims. There are five such levels.

Folk Islam

This is the simple, devout, unquestioning, but often superficial and superstitious faith shared by the vast body of illiterate country people and slightly educated

[2] For a brief account of this period, see *Heritage of the Desert*, by Harry B. Ellis, New York, Ronald Press Co., 1956, chapter 5, "Age of Empires—Arab and Ottoman."
[3] Consult Appendix A.

townsfolk. It is an orally transmitted faith, centering in traditional practices and dominated by the professional clerical leaders, the local mullahs or sheikhs (shaikhs). Especially in rural regions this "folk Islam" is only a thin veneer overlaid upon primitive animistic beliefs and customs.

These simple believing people put blue beads around the necks of their donkeys or their children to ward off the "evil eye"; stick bits of cloth on the gateway of a shrine that is supposed to possess magic properties of healing, fertility, or good luck; or light candles in wayside cubicles sanctified as burial places of the "descendants of the imams"—religious leaders in the hereditary line from Muhammad.

There is in folk Islam as yet almost no broadening of horizons and no modern questioning of religious traditions. In many of these humble people there is a splendid quality of simple faith. However, as they advance or migrate to the cities, some of them move into one or another of the further levels of Islam.

Conservative Islam

This group comprises a diminishing number of more or less educated people. Many of them are professional leaders, lawyers, and scholars who are pillars of the traditional faith and practice of Islam. Here are the *ulema* or learned men, the theological leaders in the larger mosques and Islamic theological colleges, such as the

famous al-Azhar University in Cairo. A few of these men have been exposed to Western education but have, nevertheless, taken a stand for an unchanged Islamic tradition. To them Muhammad is *the* prophet, the Koran is *the* divine book, the sacred law is *the* way. Only as men turn to the orthodox formulations of Islam, they believe, will individuals or society find the right path.

Some of these conservatives are professional beneficiaries of established endowments, the "chief priests and scribes" who in every religion resist all innovation and are concerned to defend the faith unchanged against the forces of modernity. But many are utterly sincere, and deeply spiritual in their devotion to the best they know of God's truth.

Modern Reform in Islam

An increasing number of educated Muslims are concerned about the wide gulf between the world of traditional Islam and the complex civilization of the modern world. Genuinely religious people, they see Islam overlaid with ancient formalities and fastened in rigid molds in the pattern of an older society. They deplore the control of leaders who are unacquainted with the best in Western thought and unsympathetic to the westernized trends of Middle Eastern life today. This group hold that traditional Islam is not the true Islam that was revealed through Muhammad.

An example of this modern reformist tendency is to

be seen in the legislation proposed in 1956 by Pakistan's Commission on Marriage and Family Laws. The provisions dealing with such matters as polygamy and divorce are thoroughly in accord with accepted standards of modern life, but one newspaper explained to its Muslim readers that "The Commission has claimed that the recommendations derive directly from the Qur'an and the Sunnah; that no rights not granted under them are proposed, but that machinery is suggested to give proper effect to Islam's principles." [4]

The reformers are looked upon with suspicion by conservative Muslims, and are not understood at all by the adherents of "folk Islam." Yet the modernists, contending that traditional Islam is irrelevant to much of modern life, believe that ultimately Islam must reformulate its truth in up-to-date terms or perish.

Islam as a Society

The great body of ordinary, well-educated or partially educated people living in the cities still call themselves Muslims, but Islam for them is actually not a religion. They are similar to what Dr. John A. Mackay has referred to as the "alumni" of the church; they have moved out beyond the ivied walls of the old institution, with only a lingering loyalty to a sentimental tradition.

The "alumni" of Islam think of it mainly as a social

[4] Editorial in the newspaper *The Statesman*, Calcutta and New Delhi, India, July 5, 1956.

and political solidarity, useful as a defense against the corrosion of Western influence or the dangers of Western domination. In this latter respect they may be almost fanatically loyal. Most of the resurgence of Islam in recent times is of this nature. This is the prevailing form of "Islam" met by the Christian missionary in urban centers in the Middle East. Such a "Muslim" may be just as unready and unwilling, or more so, to leave the solidarity of the Islamic community as one who has cherished a genuine religious belief in the spiritual truth of Islam.

"Post-Islamic" Secularism

A growing number of Middle Easterners have given up Islam entirely. They look upon it as an outdated anachronism with no pertinent answers to the real problems of the modern world. They believe that its religious principles and its traditional form of society are inadequate for the needs of the modern man. A few of these new-day pagans are explicitly scornful and vociferously anti-Islamic, but most of them are simply indifferent, no longer even concerned to be hostile to Islam. These people are willing to accept the benefits of inherited membership in the solidarity of the Muslim community, but they are thoroughly disillusioned with Islam and with "religion" of any sort. Communism or a thoroughgoing westernization in its secular forms are held to be "the wave of the future" for a successful society.

CHAPTER 5

A Christian View of the Meccan Road

IN HIS APPROACH TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF ISLAM, THE Christian labors under a severe handicap. Islam has always been a hostile and competitive adversary of Christianity. But the Christian can and should approach any other religious faith with a disposition to judge it as fairly as possible, to appreciate its values, and to endeavor to feel the attraction of its insights. Certainly we shall not attain a position of sufficient friendship and understanding to begin to communicate the gospel of Christ to the Muslim until we have thought and felt our way as far as possible into the Muslim mind and heart.

THE STRENGTHS OF ISLAM

Islam reveals, together with what the Christian considers to be serious inadequacies, a number of attractive qualities. Among the strong points of Islam are cer-

tainly the following—although we may feel that some of these elements of strength create difficulties or fail to reach as far as possible to the full heights of religious truth.

Awareness of the sublime reality of God. The average Muslim has, like the founder of his religion, a conspicuously vivid and vital consciousness of God. His speech is full of references to God that are almost never profane and, although often casual and thoughtless, usually express a true feeling of the reality and presence of God.

Belief in the dependence and humility of man. Aware as he is of God's sovereignty, the Muslim has a genuine sense of human dependence and a proper humility in relation to God. Sometimes this becomes a fatalistic resignation from responsibility for man's own actions, but it is generally a simple and accurate perspective that sees the greatness of God and the consequent utter need of man.

Emphasis on moral standards. Against the background of Arabian paganism, the moral emphasis of Muhammad's teaching was significant. The Christian, however, tends to be more impressed with the extent to which the moral teaching of Islam falls short of the ethical standards taught and practiced by Christ. The Muslim does not consider the ethical code demanded of him to be unattainably high. It is sometimes said of an outstandingly good Muslim that "he is better than

his creed," a remark that has never been applied to even the best of Christians. However, Islam has its ethical emphasis, and one finds cases where the best tradition and finest principles of Islam are earnestly followed, producing examples of noble, generous, and upright character.

Readiness of Muslim witness. Anyone who has seen devout Muslims engaged in the ritual of prayer in public places—in a crowded teahouse, at a busy street-corner, or beside a construction job—cannot but admire their unashamed witness. There is a challenging lesson in the Muslim's naturalness and freedom from self-consciousness with regard to his religion. It should be noted that the missionary extension of Islam has usually been at the hands of ordinary Muslim merchants and traders.

The principle of brotherhood. There is a fundamental democratic ideal of religious equality in Islam. It is not always honored in practice, and the ideal is seriously weakened by the failure of traditional Muslim society to extend the conception to women as well as men. The ideal is likewise restricted to the Muslim community, and falls far short of a full, worldwide human brotherhood. In Islam there is no color bar, and no religious hierarchy, and the strong community consciousness of Islam creates on the part of every man a sense of dignity and loyalty.

In addition, the Muslim would ordinarily mention four further elements of strength in Islam. These con-

tentions tend, however, to draw from the Christian something less than full admiration or agreement.

Simplicity of Islam. Islam is a simple, unmysterious, "down to earth" religion, and these qualities give it a universal appeal.

Muhammad's "worldliness." Islam's founder was a practical man of the world—a married man, a warrior, a businessman—not himself sinless. He can therefore be imitated without too much difficulty, and the moral expectations of Islam are not unattainably high.

Beauty of the Koran. The phrases of the Koran fall upon Arab ears with a flowing beauty and magic rhythm which confirm, if they do not create, a conviction as to its divine origin.

Islam as the ultimate word. Islam is considered as the crown and culmination of religion in human history, the superior and final faith, abrogating whatever truth was in previous religions, or in their prophets or sacred books.

THE SILENCES OF ISLAM

The Christian who endeavors to think his way into the religious devotion of the Muslim finds his appreciation called forth by the elements of strength that he discovers in Islam. On the other hand, he finds himself searching in vain for several of the features of religious experience that he feels, from what he has learned of Jesus Christ, to be of supreme importance. Inevitably

the modern Christian looks at Islam, not with the eyes of, or out of comparison with, Arabian paganism, but with eyes enlightened by "the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." One must study a sympathetic and intensive analysis of Islam and Christianity, such as one finds in Dr. Kenneth Cragg's *The Call of the Minaret,* in order to appreciate fully the values of both religions. Here we can set down only a few questions that the earnest Christian finds himself asking about the silences of Islam.

Is God only a God of supreme power or is he also a God of love? Although the phrase "merciful and compassionate" is frequently attached to the name of God in Islam, the predominant conception of God in the Muslim view is of power, not of love. This is because Muslim theology has always been concerned to protect the absoluteness of God's unity and sovereignty and has shrunk from attributing any specific character to God. The bare, indescribable absoluteness of God makes him only a powerful or distant dictator who is not concerned for the welfare of the individual man. Some of the Muslim mystics, called Sufis, have tried in their devotional exercises to bridge the gap and bring God closer and more personally near to man. But in general Islam has, by its very zeal to maintain the unlimitedness of God, in effect limited God. It has denied to him the very central aspect of divine power, the care for men that reaches down to redeem.

An example of the transforming quality of the Christian concept of God's love for man comes to mind. A colporteur frequently encounters rebuffs and hostility, but one agent of the Bible Society in the Middle East—a big man whose smile is always as broad as his handlebar mustache—was attacked with a knife by a fanatical young Muslim who was attempting to show off his religious zeal. The forgiving spirit of the colporteur toward his assailant completely won the latter's heart and changed his spirit. He began studying the Bible, confessed his sin, and reported that in the Bible he had learned of a God of love, a God of forgiveness, a God who really cared for men.

Can a religion based on submission to the decrees of an arbitrary God produce a conviction of genuine freedom and responsibility in the heart of man? A frequent result of the Islamic emphasis upon God's rigid determination of all earthly events is a practical mood of fatalism. The sense of man's responsibility is correspondingly less, and this is one reason for the slowness and conservatism sometimes found in the Middle East.

Can there be an effective moral dynamic force when ethical commands are not rooted in the character of God? The Koran and Islamic law contain many excellent ethical precepts, but these are not an expression of what God is, only of what he happens to decree. Man's obedience then, because it is like that of a child who does not understand the reason for the command,

is an unreasoning and therefore unreasonable obedience, and frequently fails. Man's goodness tends to be accidental and inadequate unless it is the expression of a realized friendship with a God who *is* good.

Perhaps the inferior status and value of women in much of Islamic society through the centuries derives from this lack of an intrinsic love in the character of God. It is genuine love that sets a value upon persons. In this area, as in many others, modern Islam is developing new ethical perspectives. Many intelligent women are aiding in the pressure in this direction. Women's rights organizations have been founded in a number of leading cities of the Middle East. A group of Muslim women at a dinner party recently talked among themselves, and then announced to the men, "We women are not satisfied with our Prophet." Woman's suffrage has been generally opposed by conservative Muslim religious authorities, but it has become legalized in recent years in an increasing number of Middle Eastern countries.

Can a religion as bare and rigid as Islam prompt the highest development of human potentialities? The simplicity of Islam imposes limits both upon the adequacy of man's understanding of God and upon man's realization of his own highest spiritual powers. Christian doctrines of God's redemptive revelation in Christ; of the Trinity as a description of God's many-sided operation in dealing with men; of man's sin and salvation; are

fundamentally not abstruse or unduly complicated. Rather they are the only adequate explanation of the greatness of God and the efficacy of God's redeeming love. Undue simplicity can easily shut off a full vision of the reality of God and can impose a ceiling upon the growth of man to his highest human potentiality.

In one of the large Middle Eastern cities a Christian and a Muslim are partners in a radio recording service. One of the programs prepared by the Muslim was a radio script of a priest explaining the Christian faith in simple terms to a little boy. This Muslim is a graduate of a Christian school and is actually imbued with many sincere Christian convictions. Blocked by social pressure from open confession of Christian faith, the young man is seeking to fill the gap in his life and to satisfy the unmet spiritual need and hunger in his heart by this kind of expression of his inmost thoughts.

Can religious law imposed by a civil community create an atmosphere of liberty in which human character can best develop? Islam has always insisted that man's obedience to divine law must be encouraged and protected by human authority. Christians believe that dependence on external restrictions rather than on genuine religious motivation impoverishes human character. In Islam human authority—the state—has always predominated, to the detriment of the divine power to uplift and ennoble the character of free men. The weakness of Islam is becoming recognized, however, by modern Muslims.

Recently, a visitor addressing the faculty at the University of Tehran lectured on obstacles to progress in Iran. He spoke of the concentration of government and business in the capital city, the lack of concern for social welfare on the part of many wealthy and influential people, and then listed Islam with its conservative effect on social customs as one of the obstacles to progress. One of the listeners, defending Islam's historic role, questioned the visitor's strictures on the conservative aspects of Muslim thought. Immediately a chorus of opinion arose from other members of the group, agreeing with the visitor's description of Islam's restrictive influence.

The foregoing are brief references to a few of the paralyzing silences of Islam—silences that constitute the reasons and the opportunity for a Christian mission to the world of Islam. Frequently we hear it said that a Christian mission in a non-Christian land is an intolerable presumption. Such critics should consider these words of Dr. Kenneth Cragg: "The Christian gospel in its world-wide expressiveness proceeds upon convictions about the nature of God and of man which by their quality cannot be localized. . . . To believe in Christ at all is to acknowledge Him a universal Christ. Because He is requisite to all, He is perquisite to none. The Christian mission is simply an active recognition of the dimensions of the love of God. Christ belongs to us because He belongs to all. He is ours only by virtue of His

universality. To think otherwise would be unpardonable presumption." [1]

The Middle East is often thought of as a "mission field," but it is first of all the homeland of the Christian church. Jesus Christ himself was an authentic Middle Easterner, and the Middle East was the original "home base" of the Christian mission to the world.

Branches of the ancient Christian church survive in almost every country of the Middle East. Islam came into a world—in West Asia and North Africa—dominated by Christianity. Almost everywhere, except in the heart of the Arabian peninsula, Muslims have lived beside Christians.

Five or 6 per cent of the population of the total Middle East area are Christian. For the most part, these people are members of one of the surviving branches of the early Eastern churches. A few of them are modern converts resulting from Protestant and Roman Catholic mission work.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE MUSLIM MIND

The place of the Christian church in the Muslim world is greatly affected by what Muslims know of Christians and their faith. As the Muslim looks at Christianity in the Middle East, he sees:

The old Eastern churches. The Muslim fails to discern the basic Christian truth and its excellence that lie

[1] Cragg, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-183.

beneath the exterior façade of these churches. Instead he is aware of the characteristics of church life that he sees in his community. These are:

(a) Elaborate rituals in ancient languages, often unknown even to the worshiping people.

(b) Impressive buildings with interiors ornately decorated by images or icons, which transgress what Muhammad said (repeating the second of the Ten Commandments) forbidding any likeness by human hands (an emphasis directed by Muhammad against the idols of Arabian paganism).

(c) Condoning the use of wine and pork, forbidden in the Koran.

(d) Priestly hierarchies, usually composed of men of low education in the lesser orders and at the higher levels made up of men endowed with trappings of ostentatious power and ceremony.

(e) General lack of zealous faith or distinctive ethical superiority in the conduct of the people.

Christian churches that were defeated and repressed by Muslim conquests. When the conflict was first joined in the seventh century, Islam proved the stronger.

A religion already superseded by Islam. This conviction of the superiority of the "later, improved model," based on the fact that Islam came later than Christianity and then decisively defeated the Christian church on its own ground, is deeply imbedded in the Muslim consciousness.

"Minority" peoples, historically tolerated in Islamic lands, but consigned to a second-class status. Chris-

tians do not "belong" to the community in lands where the preponderant society is Muslim. Consequently they are looked down upon with scorn, pity, or indifference.

Modern Christian missions. The new Christian movement is making a strong impression upon the Middle Eastern consciousness because of its schools, literacy activities, hospitals, and welfare centers. But it is viewed as a Western importation, a part of the whole invasion of the Middle East by Western life. Christian missions, then, are regarded as more characteristically Western than Christian. They suffer from every aspect of anti-Western, anti-colonial emotion that disturbs the mind of the average Middle Easterner.

For these five reasons, Christianity approaches the Middle East today, not as a fresh, clear pathway of pilgrimage, but as an old trail, presumably well known, which has dropped into disuse, weed-grown and obstructed by newly fallen debris. The Christian church has much to overcome in its effort to win the allegiance of the Muslim Middle Easterner in the middle of the twentieth century.

RELIGION AND THE NEW PILGRIMAGE

The Middle Easterner today is not sure that he can find the way to a stable, developing, successful society along the old pilgrim routes of religion as he knows them. The importance of religion is deeply ingrained in his thought and life. But he stands perplexed and un-

sure as he faces the modern world. Does religion indeed hold an answer to the needs of society today? Is it the task of his religion to restore or to reinterpret, to coerce or to liberate, to walk the old paths or strike out on the new? Does his religion hold within itself the seeds of revival? Can this revival be effective without a new freedom of religious approach? These are some of the problems of the Middle East pilgrimage.

CHAPTER 6

Is Christianity the Way?

THE EARLIEST NAME FOR CHRISTIANITY WAS "THE WAY." Before the terms "Christian" or "Christian church" were ever known, the faith and life of the followers of Jesus Christ came to be called simply "the Way." [1] Jesus himself had said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). Christians through the centuries have been not merely believers in certain doctrines or performers of certain duties. They have been the wayfarers, the pilgrims along "the Way."

The Christians of the Middle East, and their fellow-members of the church throughout the world, now confront all-important questions: Is Christianity still—and now—the Way? Can it be the way of a modern pilgrimage for the Middle Eastern peoples? In the midst of the smoldering bitterness, the pent-up frustrations, the violence and hatred of the Middle East today, how can the authentic Christian Way be demonstrated?

[1] See Acts 9:2; 19:9,23; 22:4; 24:14,22.

Thus far we have looked only at the distorted image of the Christian church as it is reflected in the minds of those who do not know the real Christ. Now we turn to the church itself to learn the story of its development and to understand the Christian forces that play a part in the life of the Middle East of the present day.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN HISTORY

A charming old Turkish-style building in Beirut houses the government offices of the Republic of Lebanon. The building with its arcaded balconies surrounding a garden courtyard stands high on a hill above the central business section and the busy harbor of the city. It overlooks the blue waters of St. George's Bay and the broad expanse of the Mediterranean Sea. In the background looms the snow-crowned range of the Lebanon mountains. Here, each November, an Independence Day reception is given by the president and his cabinet. Leaders of government, business, education, and the professions, foreign diplomats, and the representatives of religion come in an endless stream to greet the assembled officials.

The guest who comes at the hour appointed for religious leaders finds himself caught up in the colorful procession of dignitaries from the ancient Orthodox and Catholic churches. There are patriarchs, bishops, metropolitans, archimandrites, monsignors, and lesser officials in profusion. They are garbed in robes of black and

scarlet and purple, with gold braid and silver chains, and an amazing variety of headgear—voluminously wrapped black satin turbans, flat derbies, oversized tam-o'-shanters, high-peaked and round-domed brimless creations, and some that look like a top hat that has been put on upside down. The Protestant representatives in sack suits or cutaways seem very drab and underdressed indeed!

Lebanon, protected by deep mountain gorges, has more successfully preserved its older Christian population than any other part of the Middle East. Moreover, because it is centrally located, it has been an asylum of refuge for persecuted minorities through the centuries. The Independence Day procession is a living panorama of the early history of the Christian church. Many of the main schisms, heresies, and subdivisions of church history are still preserved in Lebanon in the surviving remnants of a dozen branches of the ancient Eastern Church.[2]

MUSLIM CONQUEST AND CHRISTIAN MINORITIES

In the seventh century the Muslim Arabs in the enthusiasm of their new faith and political unity broke out of the Arabian peninsula into the lands of the declining Byzantine and Persian empires. The Christian

[2] Consult Appendix B for a brief catalogue of the various branches of the Christian Church in the Middle East today.

churches were weakened by doctrinal divisions, by the concern of their leaders for political power, and by a general decline of zeal and spiritual vigor. At no time since the spread of Christianity in the first century was the Christian church so weak and ineffective or the lands in which it held sway so enfeebled and so ripe for conquest. In a private conversation dealing with the churches in the Muslim environment of the Middle East, Dr. Charles Malik, Lebanese educator and diplomat and Greek Orthodox Christian, remarked that "the trouble with the Christians in the seventh century was that they didn't care enough about Christ!" This comment stands as a challenge to Christians of any century in the Middle East or elsewhere.

At the time of the Muslim conquest, it was decided by the Arab leaders that the Arabian peninsula—the cradleland of Islam—should be 100 per cent Muslim, and the number of Christians and Jews remaining in those territories was quickly reduced. The policy in the conquered areas, however, was to respect those whom Muhammad had called "people of the book." These included Jews, Christians, and Sabians (a mysterious group whose identity is unknown and who were not related to the Sabians of southern Iraq), and later Zoroastrians and Berbers. Accordingly the first wave of military conquest by the Muslim Arabs effected little change in the churches of Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Egypt, and other lands.

Although they were free to exercise their own religious practices, the Christians were required to pay a special tribute or poll tax and it soon became evident that their tolerated status was in effect a second-class citizenship in the dominant Muslim society. Following a plan that had been in use in the Persian empire, Christian and Jewish groups were organized as *millets* or "national minorities." Since the Muslim community was ruled by Islamic religious law, the *millet* system provided that each non-Muslim sect should have its own court and its own laws. Increasingly, other requirements were placed upon Christians and Jews, such as the wearing of a distinctive garb or badge. Many of the legal aspects of the *millet* system were further elaborated under the rule of the Ottoman Turks.

THE SURVIVAL OF THE CHURCH

Under these conditions the Christian church survived —to a degree. In the mountainous regions of Lebanon, Turkey, and northern Iraq, and on the desert edges of Egypt, considerable Christian populations continued in their faith. The Arabs were accustomed to galloping their horses on more level terrain, or gaining control of fertile oases, and had little interest in subjugating the rugged hill country. But as the generations went on, the majority of Christians in the open country and the urban communities, through commercial and political pressures or by intermarriage, gave up their faith. Many

churches were converted into mosques. It is to the credit of long generations of indigenous Christians in the Middle East that many of them remained faithful. The Christian church did survive.

However, the cost of survival, in addition to minority status, was the almost inevitable acquisition of a "minority psychology." This cautious, defensive, defeatist attitude grew out of the fact that the Christians existed for the most part within their own socially isolated communities. "In the course of the centuries the Christian Arab communities acquired, in the memorable phrase of Albert Hourani, 'the sad wisdom of minorities—the knowledge of how to survive.' For survive they did . . . as an element of the Arab world throughout its history." [3]

Official persecution of Christians has been relatively rare, but in a few instances it has been widespread and ruthless. Especially severe persecutions have taken place where substantial and compact minorities—such as the Armenians in Turkey or the Assyrians in Turkey and Iran—have seemed to constitute a potential political danger or appeared to be in a position to conspire with foreign powers. Some of the worst persecutions came between 1895 and 1920. Such periods have been both a cause and an effect of the intervention by the European powers to protect the Christian minorities.

Because of these various difficulties it is quite understandable that a large element of the substantial emigra-

[3] Atiyah, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

tion from the Middle East to both North and South America has been from the minority groups.

Another conspicuous effect of a minority psychology has been the almost total abandonment by the Eastern churches of evangelistic zeal and outreach. Fearing persecution or repression, the Eastern churches have tended to keep cautiously to themselves. With a few exceptions they have shown an attitude of disbelief in the sincere conversion of a Muslim to the Christian faith. Even evangelical Protestant Christians of the Middle East are often heard to say, "The Muslim who becomes a Christian does so only for ulterior motives, because he wants to marry a Christian girl or establish an advantageous connection with representatives of the Western world." Fortunately there are many instances of sincere conversions that belie this commonly held prejudice. The almost complete abeyance of evangelism among the "old Christians" has played a large part, as we shall see, in the relations of the Protestant Christian mission to the Eastern churches.

THE SECTARIAN DIVISION OF SOCIETY

The sectarian basis of Middle Eastern society occasioned by the *millet* system and the minority courts of law has affected contemporary political alignments as well. For instance, representation in the parliament of Lebanon is on the basis of religious sects. The religious sect automatically becomes the political party. This

situation heightens the barrier between one religious community and another and is an important obstacle to Christian evangelism. In many countries the Christian's right to vote is severely limited. The Armenian citizen of Iran can vote, for example, but only for the two Armenian deputies in the parliament. In several countries the Christian convert from Islam cannot vote at all, unless he avows his membership in the Muslim community into which he was born, which he is of course unwilling to do. However, the nations of the Middle East are increasingly asserting the full equality of all citizens. Turkey in 1924 and Egypt in 1956 abolished not only the minority courts of the Christians and Jews, but the Islamic religious courts—the *Shariah* courts—as well. This trend encourages all who are concerned for a greater degree of religious liberty in the Middle East.

THE SILENT CENTURIES

Protestant Christian missions were established in the Middle East in the nineteenth century. Before then there had been only isolated instances of concern in the rest of the Christian world for the presentation of the gospel of Christ to Muslims. During the first century after the Muslim conquest there were a few attempts to explain the Christian faith to the Muslim conquerors. The eloquent John of Damascus who died about 748 (known to modern Christians as the author of two familiar Easter hymns: "The Day of Resurrection" and

"Come, ye faithful, raise the strain of triumphant gladness") engaged in doctrinal debates with Muslim leaders. He published in dialogue form a manual for Christians on how to present arguments for Christianity to Muslims. For the most part, however, the Christian minorities in the Middle East retreated into a shell of silence.

Between the first century and the modern era there are only two outstanding names in connection with a Christian missionary outreach to Muslims. St. Francis of Assisi went to Egypt in 1219 to visit the crusading army. He is known to have crossed the lines to meet the sultan and talk with him about the truths of the Christian faith. Raymond Lull (1232-1316), a convert from the island of Majorca, was one of the outstanding scholars of the Middle Ages. He was distinguished not only because his primary aim was the evangelization of Muslims but because he urged friendly persuasion rather than hostile controversy or crusading military force.

In the first two centuries after the Protestant Reformation in Europe there was almost no sense of missionary obligation in any direction in the Protestant churches, with the exception of some concern for the American Indians. In the eighteenth century only the Moravians and other German pietists were sufficiently moved by a spiritual awakening to look out beyond their own narrow horizons. A Moravian doctor named Frederic William

Hocker spent almost thirty years in Cairo before his death there in 1782. It will be recalled that a newly formed English Baptist missionary society appointed William Carey as a missionary to India in 1792. This date marks the traditional beginning of a sustained modern world mission on the part of the Protestant churches.

THE ADVENT OF PROTESTANT MISSIONS

The real beginning of modern Protestant missions in the Middle East came after the evangelical revivals in Great Britain and America at the end of the eighteenth century. Several pioneer investigators sent out by various new British missionary societies visited the lands of the Eastern Mediterranean in the years 1808-1821. The first two American missionaries were commissioned by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions that arose from the spark of the famous Haystack Prayer Meeting in 1806. Pliny Fisk and Levi Parsons went to the Middle East in 1819, and first visited Malta and Smyrna. Parsons settled in Jerusalem in 1821 but died in Egypt the following year. Fisk spent some time in Turkey and Malta and died at Beirut in 1825.

A brief but significant chapter of missionary history was written a few years earlier by Henry Martyn, an English missionary whose flaming zeal, expressed in his diary as he landed at Calcutta, lives on in the memorable words, "Now let me burn out for God." He was a

linguistic genius, and his interest was attracted to the Persian language. He spent the winter of 1811-12 in Shiraz in Iran, revising a translation of the New Testament and Psalms in Persian that he had begun in India. Exhausted by the arduous journey to Tabriz, where he placed a copy of the New Testament in the hands of the British ambassador, he died in Tokat, Turkey, in 1812 at the age of 31. Although his expressed ambition was so soon realized, he succeeded in making an ineradicable impression of glowing Christian enthusiasm that has been an inspiration to the following generations of Christian workers in Iran.

THE EARLY STRATEGY OF THE CHRISTIAN MISSION

The dominant motive of the first modern missionaries to the Middle East was to bring the truth of Christ back to all the people dwelling in the homelands of the Christian church. The people of this area, living at that time in the declining culture of the Ottoman empire, were in great need of enlightenment and help. It is interesting to observe the breadth of vision reflected in the instructions given by the American Board in 1819 to Pliny Fisk and Levi Parsons: "You will survey with earnest attention the various tribes and classes who dwell in that land and in the surrounding countries. The two grand inquiries ever present in your minds will be, 'What good can be done?' and 'By what means?' What

can be done for Jews? What for pagans? What for Mohammedans? What for Christians? What for the people in Palestine? What for those in Egypt, in Syria, in Armenia, in other countries to which your inquiries may be extended?" [4]

Inevitably the Christian mission focused its purpose on the great Muslim population of the Middle East in the desire that the people might learn of the real Christ and come to a faith in him. Practically, however, the early missionaries found it almost impossible to make effective contact with the Muslim population, due to the community solidarity that characterized the life and thought of the people.

In 1835 the American Board sent the Rev. J. L. Merrick to explore the possibilities of mission work among the Muslims in Iran. He visited Tehran, Isfahan, and Shiraz, returning to Tabriz with the verdict, "I struggled hard and long to retain the hope that I might, in some sense, preach the Gospel in Persia so soon as qualified for the work; but I am at length convinced that public preaching to the Persians is, at present, not only inexpedient but impracticable." [5]

The early missionaries soon learned of the handicap to Christianity in the Middle East existing in the unat-

[4] Addison, James Thayer. *The Christian Approach to the Moslem.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1942, p. 82.
[5] *A Century of Mission Work in Iran, 1834-1934.* Beirut, Lebanon: Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1936, p. 20.

tractive or repellent features of the ancient Eastern churches. We have seen that the ornate decorations and ceremonies, the low educational level of the priesthood and the showy splendor of the hierarchy, and the eating and drinking habits of the main Christian communities proved to be very unenticing aspects of Christianity to the average Muslim. Moreover, these churches, with their minority psychology, had evidently lost their concern for any successful evangelization of the Muslim population; or at least held little hope for such an approach. They had almost no leaders with the educational background for communicating the faith, and no outreach of service to the needs of society around them.

Even more serious was the lack of a Bible in the common Arabic or other modern language of the people. Today a historic plaque hangs high on the wall of an upstairs room in the old main building of the American School for Girls in Beirut. It marks the monumental and significant labor of translating the Bible into the Arabic language. Eli Smith, from 1847 to his death in 1856, and Cornelius Van Dyck, who then took up the task and completed it in 1864, worked in this room with their Arab associates. Although most of the people in the various ancient churches in the Arab world spoke Arabic, their Bibles and church liturgies were in the old, long-dead classical Greek, Coptic, or Syriac. No single achievement of the early missionaries did so much for the renewal of spiritual vitality and Christian knowl-

edge. Other translations into modern Armenian, Turkish, and Persian followed.

The missionaries were able to offer many contributions to the reform and revitalization of the old churches. They could see that their one ultimate hope of evangelizing the people of the Middle East would be, not through the scattered efforts of a few foreigners, but through the rekindling of the fires of "first century Christian" faith and zeal in the various ancient churches.

The instructions given by the American Board to the Rev. and Mrs. Justin Perkins, pioneer missionaries to Iran in 1834, said that their "main object will be to enable the Nestorian Church, through the grace of God, to exert a commanding influence in the spiritual regeneration of Asia." [6] Eight years later Perkins himself still held to the hope that the Nestorian church "will send forth faithful missionaries of the cross, in such numbers and with such holy zeal, as shall bear the tidings of salvation to every corner of benighted Asia." [7] In recording these words, the Rev. William McE. Miller comments, "The mission was to be a campaign of evangelism which had nothing less than the conversion of all Asia as its goal. Great was the faith of our fathers!" [8]

Similar hopes were held for the role of the Armenian

[6] *A Century of Mission Work in Iran*, op. cit., p. 18.
[7] *Ibid.*
[8] *Ibid.*

and Greek churches in Turkey; the Greek and Syrian churches in Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine; and the Coptic church in Egypt. The strategy of the early missionaries was to educate and enlighten the Christians of the old churches, to help train their leadership and equip them with the Bible in modern translation, and thus to restore the warm evangelical faith and evangelizing zeal of these Christians.

RESULTS OF EARLY MISSIONARY LABORS

There were three results of this strategy: (1) the revival of considerable numbers of individual Christians who came to a new understanding of the Biblical, evangelical Christian faith; (2) the immediate or eventual exclusion of many of these individuals by the conservative leaders of the old churches; (3) the spread of general enlightenment far beyond the bounds of the Christian community. This last was a by-product of the emphasis on education, printing presses, and literature in the common languages.

The Protestant form of the Christian faith, in contrast to the practices of the ancient Eastern churches, appeals in many respects to the Muslim mind. This is a reason why until recently the center for Christian work among students of the American University of Beirut and the Beirut College for Women has been known as the Protestant Student House. Now called the Stu-

dent Christian Center, its enlarged program still enlists the interest of many Muslim students.

One of these young Muslims was particularly attracted by the students' emphasis on service projects. He became in time an officer of the organization, the director of its summer camp for boys, and since his graduation has been a leader in social work in his community. He once said, "Our people have been too proud to get their hands dirty in working for others. I like a religion that is sufficiently concerned about people that it *does* something to help them." Dr. Bayard Dodge, former president of the American University of Beirut, has said, "The Protestant Christians are playing an immensely important role in demonstrating to the Middle East the value of service to others."

The result of the exclusion from the old churches of many of the evangelically awakened Christians was the inevitable formation, contrary to the original missionary aim, of new Protestant churches.

THE PROBLEM OF PROSELYTISM

A few mission groups, mainly Anglican, have sometimes refused to receive members with Eastern church backgrounds. Insisting that awakened members remain in, or even outside, the membership of the old church as a leaven, they hoped to challenge the Eastern church to evangelical reform and evangelistic outreach. Other missions, on the contrary, have almost from the start

established branches of their own Protestant church and welcomed into their membership all who met the qualifications of faith regardless of background. However, a middle-of-the-road policy has been followed by most missions. They declare their primary aim to be the persuasion of Muslims to the truth of the Christian faith. A subsidiary aim is to enlist the older churches in this program of evangelism and to assist these churches to a more vital Christian faith and life. It is only as a final necessary resort that Christians excluded from the old churches are welcomed into new Protestant churches. Many of the Protestant (Evangelical) churches have also adopted this general pattern.

The policy has some drawbacks, however. An educational missionary remarked recently, "What am I to do? There is a group of young people from the old church who are studying the Bible with me. They have a zealous faith, intent upon evangelism and practical social service. They refuse, despite my urgings, to go back to the old church, saying that in their local church at least there is nothing for them. Shall I tell them that they are not welcome in the Evangelical church?" Faced by this common dilemma, more of the Protestant missions and churches are adopting an open-door policy. They realize, of course, that there are implications in the other direction as they themselves face the challenge of independent or "fringe sect" groups.

There have been periods of hospitable reception by

the Eastern churches, and today a new ecumenical spirit on the part of ancient churches, Evangelical churches, and mission groups is on the rise. It is not unnatural, however, that the Eastern churches have resisted and resented the influx of Protestant missions. Today, the same resentment is felt by the Evangelical churches toward the entrance of independent and "uncooperative" groups. Evangelical church leaders recognize that the proper response is not complaint nor hostility, but a program in their own churches that will stimulate and hold the loyalty of their members. It is hoped that they can avoid dissension with the newer groups.

At the Ecumenical Youth Consultation in Beirut in April, 1955, an alert young Greek Orthodox theology professor from Istanbul asked a visiting missionary speaker, "What is the theological justification of Protestant missions in the Middle East?" The question was discussed by the group and the answer was summed up in the one word, "evangelism." Although the reasons for the absence of evangelistic outreach to Muslims on the part of the minority Christian churches are evident, the responsibility for such evangelism on the part of the larger Christian church in the world is likewise manifest. This constitutes the *raison d'être* of Protestant missions in the Muslim world.

The development of the ecumenical movement is producing a closer mutual understanding on the part of various participating churches. Proselytism—the seeking of

converts—is a subject that has been discussed specifically in recent years in the Middle East and in the wider counsels of the church. More exact definition of proselytism and of Christian witness has been given in the provisional report on "Christian Witness, Proselytism and Religious Liberty in the Setting of the World Council of Churches" approved by the Central Committee of the World Council in 1956. In this report proselytism is identified with religious change induced by unworthy motives or methods and is rejected. At the same time freedom of Christian witness is proclaimed. This includes the agreement "that we recognize the right of the mature individual to change his church allegiance if his conscience will not permit him to remain longer in the church of which he is at present a member." [9] Although with numerous specific cautions and safeguards, in effect the open door policy is approved.

The various patriarchates of the Greek Orthodox Church in the Middle East, and the Coptic and Armenian Churches, are now members of the World Council of Churches. Endeavors are currently being made to reorganize the Near East Christian Council so that it will enlist the participation of the older churches and thus express the more complete cooperation of all the Christian forces in the Middle East.

Already there is excellent cooperation by Protestant, Orthodox, and Roman Catholic agencies in the relief

[9] *The Ecumenical Review*, October 1956, p. 55. Used by permission.

work for Palestinian refugees. The Near East Christian Council committee meets regularly at the Greek Orthodox bishopric in Beirut with representatives of other voluntary agencies. In the clothing distribution that is an important aspect of the work, the area committees of the Near East Christian Council (which get their supplies largely through Church World Service in America), the Lutheran World Federation (the largest single agency in the coordinated Protestant relief work in Jordan and Syria), the Pontifical Mission (Roman Catholic), and others frequently share their supplies with one another, so that the needs of the refugees at the various distribution centers may be cared for as equitably as possible.

Ecumenical cooperation is easier in the fellowship of special occasions in Evanston or Geneva than in local situations where the several churches exist side by side. However, the spirit and experience of cooperation are creating—even down at the local level, where the problems are practical and personal—a growing understanding and practice of Christian teamwork.

CURRENT TRENDS IN THE EASTERN CHURCHES

Some of the negative features of the Eastern churches encountered by the early missionaries in the nineteenth century were due to the general low levels of education and enlightenment in the later years of the Ottoman

empire. The long centuries of minority treatment from which the surviving Christians suffered had also left their mark. The advance of education and culture in the Middle East in recent years, and the competitive challenge of Protestant and Roman Catholic missions, have begun to create a new spirit in many of the Eastern churches. Reform societies have grown up in several of the churches. Some of these emphasize practical social service or improvements in church administration and finance. Others are concerned with Bible study, theological education, and liturgical modification in the direction of the common language of the people. Still others are interested in Christian education and youth work and a renewal of evangelistic spirit. But whatever their specific interest and purpose, the outlook for the future is indeed hopeful.

Participation in ecumenical work camps on the part of Orthodox young people is evidence of a new outlook. In the summer of 1955 a visitor to the ancient city of Sidon on the coast of Lebanon would have seen a group of young men and women, sleeves rolled up, sweat streaming down their faces, hard at work on a building project beside a sun-drenched roadway in the outskirts of the city. This was an international, ecumenical work camp, one of many sponsored around the world by the Youth Division of the World Council of Churches. The young people were engaged in constructing a new building for the Evangelical Church of Sidon. A young Leba-

nese pastor, a native of the hills in the background of the scene, was one of the perspiring participants. Several of the Middle Easterners—from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt—were members of different ancient Eastern churches. There were also American, German, British, and Austrian young people, working, worshiping, studying, and playing together. This incident is in a way symbolic of the best Christian tradition, building the church together.

Some of the reform societies or movements in the Eastern churches have been quite independent of the church authorities, and some have been looked on with suspicion or disapproval by the higher officials of the church. The significant Greek Orthodox Youth Movement in Lebanon has been carried on largely by laymen and laywomen, and the patriarchate has vacillated in its attitude toward this movement. At one point the patriarchate donated an old, unused monastery on a headland of the coast of Lebanon for the use of the Youth Movement, and an interdenominational work camp cleaned up the buildings and redecorated the old chapel. Shortly thereafter the patriarchate changed its mind and retracted the gift of the historic site.

It is in certain outstanding individuals that one best sees the latent potentialities of the Middle Eastern church. One of the Christians from the Middle East best known in America after his ten years as ambassador of Lebanon to the United States, as well as for his lead-

ership in the United Nations, is Dr. Charles Malik. This man who is a combination statesman, educator, and Christian philosopher has stated that his three "dominant enthusiasms in life are Lebanon, education, and Jesus Christ." He is a member of the Greek Orthodox Church, but he has paid tribute to the part that was played in his Christian training by a mission school in Lebanon, Tripoli Boys' School, which he attended for three years before going to the American University of Beirut. He says that those three years were most significant in his religious formation. He tells of the daily chapel, the grace before meals, the Sunday services in the Protestant church in Tripoli, and the Sunday evening vesper services at the school. "The ultimate Christian religious realities were thus constantly kept alive in our mind. I come myself from a very religious Orthodox family, and between the ages of seven and fourteen I served in our village church as an incense carrier and a general temple servant under an uncle of my father's who was the priest of the village. But the three years I spent in Tripoli witnessed one of the profoundest and most lasting religious experiences of my life." [10]

The Christians of the Middle East, whatever their denomination or background, are involved in the total ferment of modern life in the area. They, like the Mus-

[10] From an address printed in *Theology Today*, January, 1949. Used by permission. For biographical account of Dr. Malik, see *New Voices, Old Worlds*, by Paul Geren. New York, Friendship Press, 1958.

lims, are confused and uncertain as they consider the problems of a rapidly changing society in the Middle East. Some Christians are enthusiastic Arab nationalists, confident that the future will see the development of a Pan-Arab nationalism in which Islam will not be an oppressive force and in which the Christian minorities will have the opportunity of attaining a status of liberty and equality. These Christians are concerned to do away as rapidly as possible with the sectarian system of law, politics, and citizenship.

Other Christians doubt if Pan-Arab nationalism will ever be anything but predominantly and coercively Islamic, and therefore desire to hold on to the old special community privileges of the Christian sects. The late S. A. Morrison has said, "If the conception of the democratic Nation-State is to oust in the Middle East the orthodox Muslim conception of the structure of society, the Christians must be the first to break out of the prison-house of their own communalism. . . . The prevailing defensive negative attitude of the Christian communities is self-destructive. The future of the Middle East Nation-State still hangs in the balance, and the Christian communities may be able to tip the scales in the right direction. . . . Christian leadership may make a unique contribution to the Nation-State in this critical phase of the history of its development." [11]

[11] Morrison, S. A. *Middle East Tensions.* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954, p. 170. Used by permission.

THE CHURCHES AND THE NEW PILGRIMAGE

The Christian church in the Middle East, today only a small outpost in the land of its origin, possesses many more elements of weakness than of strength. In most countries of the area it comprises a minor fraction of the population, indeed in some lands an infinitesimal minority. Stirrings of new life and vigor seem to be more than offset by the accumulated handicaps and liabilities of the centuries. But the picture is not altogether hopeless. Both in the ancient churches and in the Evangelical churches, which will be studied more carefully in the next chapter, there are indications of a new concern for the total society and a realization of the church's mission.

CHAPTER 7

The Highway of the World Christian Mission

FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY, CHRISTIAN MISSIONS HAVE been carrying on continuous work in the Middle East. The American Board of Commissioners led the way, and soon many other Protestant church organizations were dispatching missionaries to almost every country of the area. Over the years there has been an expenditure of life, time, and wealth that would be hard to calculate.

Considering the cost, the results of this work have been distressingly meager. This is especially true if they are measured by the number of converts to Christianity or by the size of the indigenous Evangelical churches. On the other hand, no one can say to what extent the Eastern churches would have further declined under the pressures of Islam if there had not been the strong influence of witness and renewal brought by the Christian missionaries from abroad. A lay leader in the Coptic

Church commented recently, "One of the best things that ever happened to the Coptic Church is the Evangelical Church in Egypt. It has compelled our awakening and reform."

In addition, awakening and enlightenment were brought to all the people of the Middle East by the education, philanthropy, and spiritual invigoration sponsored by the missions from overseas.

DEVELOPING STRATEGY IN THE CHRISTIAN MISSION

Originally, the strategy of the missionaries was evangelization of Muslims by means of the revitalizing of the ancient Eastern churches. Although the strategy did not work, a new development grew out of the failure. In the decade 1846-56 in Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Iran, and Egypt arose a new indigenous Protestant church movement. Composed of those who were excluded from the older churches, it has become known as the Evangelical Church throughout the Middle East.

The missions turned their attention to this new group of Christians, made up of infant churches in a literal sense, newly brought to birth and without trained leaders. Missionaries assumed the roles of pastors, teachers, district superintendents of the churches, and district inspectors of the village schools. Frequently the Evangelical congregations were small and considerable financial subsidy was necessary. The missionaries at first ex-

ercised an almost inevitable domination over the struggling churches as they sought to stimulate responsibility, financial support, and adequate leadership in the local congregations and in the developing larger organization of the church.

NEW PATTERNS OF APPROACH TO NON-CHRISTIANS

These new concerns, however, seemed to be leading missionaries away from their primary purpose of the evangelization of Muslims. And so they continued to look for other more direct approaches. With the passage of the years, the atmosphere in many parts of the Islamic area became more liberal and progressive. There were stirrings of new cultural life in Lebanon and Syria; expanded horizons in Egypt brought by Western influence; widespread advance of European education in many lands; movements of constitutional reform in Turkey and Iran. As time progressed, mission work among Muslims did not seem as "inexpedient and impracticable" as Merrick had found it in 1835.

Despite changing conditions, the critical question facing the Christian mission in the Middle East remains: How can the gospel of Christ be presented effectively to the Muslim people? This question confronts the missionary from overseas with a major dilemma. He realizes that ultimately the evangelization of the non-Christian population must be done by the Christian churches of

the area, by Christians who are Middle Easterners, who wear the garments and speak the language of the population.

At the moment, however, neither the older churches nor the small Evangelical churches of the Middle East have the motivation or resources to succeed or, in some cases, even to make a start in this great task of evangelism. Assistance and encouragement from stronger, enthusiastically missionary churches in other parts of the world can be of tremendous help.

Forms of Direct Evangelism

In Muslim lands large-scale preaching in public meetings has generally been either impossible or ineffective. The cornerstone of evangelism is witnessing to the Christian faith by the direct means of personal friendship.

Personal friendship evangelism is carried on in a multitude of ways. It takes place in conjunction with such activities as language lessons, tea parties, partnership in hobbies, baseball games, helping to build a tennis court, or through contacts in schools, hospitals, and social service projects. Often the friendship moves on, if a non-Christian's interest is developed, to regular Bible study —individually or in groups—to discussions of deeper levels of Christian doctrine and practice, and then to participation in the worship and other life of the church. In some cases this process stops short of confession of

faith and baptism. In other cases it goes on to the consummation of full membership in the church. This is a method whose success depends in part on the locality, its culture and the attitudes of its inhabitants. Still, every effort is made to look for situations where family or community circumstances offer an opportunity for friendship evangelism. Such situations are rarely to be found in the Muslim Middle East, except in small groups of immigrants who do not fully belong to the larger community in which they live.

A church "family" in Muscat, made up largely of converts from Islam, includes many persons who work together in the Christian hospital. As they form a group they offer an example of successful friendship evangelism on a small scale. Several converts have been made as the result of meetings in Christian homes. The steadfast testimony of one young widow who after her husband's death remained faithful to her Christian conviction, despite pressure and persecution by Muslim relatives and neighbors, made a deep impression on the whole community. The hope persists that some day larger opportunities for personal evangelism may develop in the Middle East.

Direct evangelistic activity includes the use and distribution of the Bible and Christian literature. The results of this method are often unexpected and far-reaching. One day a shopkeeper in a Middle Eastern town found some pieces of paper scattered about the street. He

collected them and used them, rolled up in little cones, as containers for the nuts that he sold. Later a purchaser, a Muslim, happened to read the printing on the paper from which he had been eating nuts and his interest was awakened. He found a friend who identified the paper as a page from the Bible, and he managed to obtain a copy of the Bible. By reading it, and coming into contact with Christian friends, he was in the end led to a full Christian faith and membership in the church.

In another case, when a missionary met a convert from Islam, the following conversation took place, to the ultimate astonishment of the missionary:

Missionary: "Who told you about Jesus Christ?"

New Christian: "Nobody."

Missionary: "That is strange. How then did you come to your belief in Christ?"

New Christian: "By reading the Bible."

Missionary: "Where on earth did you get the Bible?"

New Christian (with a smile): "I got it from you!"

Twenty years earlier the missionary had visited that place, and had given a Bible to a boy whom he met. Years later, when the boy had become a man, he found in this Bible the life-giving truth of Jesus Christ.

Correspondence courses in the Bible are increasing. Missionary and national evangelists are keeping in touch with interested inquirers in distant places by means of what may be called direct-mail evangelism, with correspondence, seasonal greetings, and pieces of Chris-

tian literature. In one case an evangelist became acquainted with a Muslim preacher and religious leader who confessed a weariness with his calling and a desire for something more vital and satisfying in life. Some months later, in reply to a friendly letter from the evangelist, he wrote, "Your letter has come at a time when the doors of sorrow and grief were opened to me, and my spirit was weary. The useful teachings and heavenly verses in the letter were like water poured on a fire, and they brought me near to the source of divine gifts and blessedness. Of you, my friend, bearer of good tidings, I ask that you pray the good God to help me."

In any one case the fruition of such Christian nurture may be uncertain, but seeds are being sown in confidence that the Lord of the harvest will in good time bring a fruitful yield.

Reading rooms have also proved effective in introducing people to Christian literature and friendship. Literacy classes or classes in the widely popular English language are valuable means of serving people and of bringing them into the atmosphere of Christian friendship. The same dual purpose can be found in Christian schools, hospitals, and social service projects. Every opportunity for personal friendship is an opportunity for the most effective form of Christian evangelism, the personal witness of friend to friend. In as many varied ways as there are facets and resources of human personality, the channels of direct evangelism are utilized by

Christian missionaries, and opportunities are never lacking.

Personal evangelism is a method of mission work that is not embodied in impressive buildings, that seeks in fact to avoid public notice and conspicuous display. Especially in the Muslim world, it often seems to have little to show in the way of results. But the impact of Christian friendship and the quiet relations of direct evangelism are a fundamental element of witness along the highway of the world Christian mission—just as they were on the roadways of Galilee.

Service to Human Need

When Pliny Fisk and Levi Parsons struck out as pioneers on the highway of the Christian mission in the Middle East in 1819, they were told to keep asking the questions, "What good can be done?" and "By what means?" Their successors have never ceased to ask these questions. Service to human need is not first of all a device of missionary strategy. It is basically an expression of the gospel of Christ, of his truth and mercy. It is a demonstration of Christ's love for the illiterate, the ignorant, the helpless, the diseased, and the dispossessed. It is an inevitable continuation of the ministry for which Christ was sent, "to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed" (Luke 4:18).

Christians, aware of Christ's promise of abundant life, have always been sensitive to human need. It was natural that missionaries of Christ should have been active in establishing schools, printing presses, hospitals, and agencies of rural and urban social welfare. Even where definite religious teaching has been prohibited this service has borne its witness of Christ's love. Some years ago a young Turkish woman, deeply interested in social work, paid this tribute to her early teacher, Mary Kinney: "She had the prophet Jesus stamped on her. And somehow she rubbed him off on us. I'll never forget the words he taught Mary Kinney, 'Whenever you do service to one of these little ones you are doing it for God himself.' " [1]

In recent years many of the broader aspects of world civilization have been extended to underdeveloped areas through United Nations technical assistance, the United States Point IV program, and the work of various other governmental and private agencies, as well as through the immense growth of welfare services by the Middle Eastern nations themselves. But for more than a century the mission of the Christian church pioneered on these paths. It continues to lead the way in many aspects of social progress, emphasizing that a moral and spiritual basis is necessary for any lasting improvement in the material aspects of society.

[1] Goodsell, Fred Field, "Confronting Moslems with Jesus Christ," *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Envelope Series,* Winter 1950, Vol. 53, No. 4, Introduction.

Each of us would be deeply interested if we were able to visit the innumerable places in the Middle East where the Christian mission continues to represent the touch of Christ's hand on human need.

We might, for instance, stop at the village of Hirz along the upper Nile Valley in Egypt. "Until a few short months ago one of the most striking facts about Hirz was that only a small handful of its people could read and write. Today, upwards of four hundred persons—almost half the entire population—can read and write, and the townspeople, fired with the confidence of their newfound abilities, are creating what amounts to a minor revolution in village, community, and social life." [2] A day school, a community center, a library, newly repaired Coptic and Evangelical churches, livestock and dairy improvement, are all by-products of the application of the famous each-one-teach-one method of literacy.

We might go to Lebanon and visit the Beirut College for Women, the only four-year senior college for women in the Arab world. There are gathered more than four hundred young women from the various religious backgrounds of several Middle East countries, living, studying, and playing together. The majority of upperclassmen are taking their major work in home economics, child development, social work, and fine arts.

[2] Lawrence, Nancy. "The ABC's in the Land of the Sphinx," *National Council Outlook*, May 1955, p. 8. Used by permission.

A recent visitor to the school queried, "Is it really any favor to these girls to train them for public service and social welfare when most of them will get married and disappear into the old-fashioned seclusion of their homes?" The question showed an unawareness of the changes that have come to the largely emancipated womanhood of many of the capital cities of the Middle East today. Not the old seclusion but rather the new futile round of the "cocktail and cabaret circuit" is often the current pattern. The alternative is a motivation for genuine public service and a fitness for meeting the expanding needs of these dynamic countries.

A friend of mine recently witnessed a symbolic incident. At the airport of a small Middle Eastern city a woman enveloped from crown to toe in the customary black *abba,* still generally worn in public by women in that region, went up the landing steps of an airplane bound for Beirut. Before entering the plane, she swept off the *abba,* revealing beneath it a modish traveling ensemble. As she stepped into the plane, she threw the rolled up *abba* down to another woman waiting below. She was now ready for her arrival in a more modern city.

In the same way the women of the Middle East are discarding the old garments of inequality and seclusion, and are stepping eagerly into the society of the modern world. Will they be ready for the new experience? The Beirut College for Women is endeavoring to provide an affirmative and constructive answer.

We might travel on a quick trip to Kuwait, where a large modern hospital, with an air-conditioned operating room, has replaced a small, outmoded building. One report telling of the early medical work in Kuwait said, "The hospital was regarded at first as the last resort of the diseased, a place where he went when all the incantations of his holy men and their potions, every system of branding and cupping, and all the most drastic purges, had been in vain. It was a place that swallowed up the sick when they were in the last stages of despair. It began to enter into the consciousness of the people, however, that not all of those who entered the hospital at death's door died. Somehow the medicines and the devil-inspired machinery of the doctor often brought about the cure that had been despaired of. The hospital gradually lost its aura of mystery and terror, and the pioneer missionary, Dr. Mylrea, came to be known affectionately as 'our father'." On the occasion of Dr. Mylrea's last visit to Kuwait in 1952 one of the leading citizens, remembering his long struggles for municipal sanitation, public vaccination, and more humane treatment of women and children, and his pioneer activities in surgery and preventive medicine, said to Dr. Mylrea, "We are standing on your shoulders!" [3]

We might journey to the shores of the Caspian Sea in northern Iran. In an underprivileged section of the city of Resht one would find the Clinic of the Good

[3] Van Ess, Dorothy. From a manuscript in progress.

Shepherd. Here hundreds of mothers (and sometimes fathers) bring their babies, learn how to care for them, and learn also of the care of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, for all the children of men.

We could also visit many Christian nursing schools that have dramatically lifted the conception of nursing in the eyes of the Middle East. Formerly considered a despised, menial occupation, unthinkable for girls of good character, nursing is now more often regarded as a noble profession of the highest dignity, valued for its skilled and tender service to human need.

It would be unfortunate to neglect several significant centers of rural welfare and agricultural experimentation and extension,[4] and a variety of projects for refugee rehabilitation or for disaster relief (flood and earthquake). In some of these projects Christians and Muslims are working together in impressive ventures of practical cooperation.

In West Pakistan, we might drop in on a missionary couple at Forman Christian College in Lahore. They have been sponsoring a weekly fellowship group of eight or nine Christian students, called The Fishers. Some of these young people joined with others during recent disastrous floods and made relief trips with supplies of food and clothing to several isolated villages. This same group is also interested in new extension projects that help

[4] For a news correspondent's detailed account of the Jibrail Rural Fellowship Center in Lebanon, see: Ellis, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-148.

poverty-stricken Christian villages by supplying improved poultry stock and vegetable seeds.

The life of the Middle East in the past century has been profoundly modified by the pioneering contributions of the Protestant Christian mission in its demonstration of the love of Christ in service to human need. Not only have countless needy human beings felt the direct touch of Christ's mercy, but large segments of society have been indirectly affected. Through Christian service the ethical dimensions of Islam have been extended, the slumbering social vision of the Eastern churches awakened, and secular governments encouraged to a widening concern for social welfare.

Toward a Missionary Church

The unquenchable hope remains that the venerable Eastern churches may stir more fully into life and fulfill the dreams of evangelistic effectiveness cherished by the first missionaries. Consequently a sense of exploratory alertness exists in the Evangelical churches and the missions to ways of developing the fullest cooperation and assistance with the older churches. In the meantime, the Evangelical church—small though it is in most countries—offers a nucleus and base of incalculable potentiality and value to the Christian effort.

There are several reasons why the creation of a warmly evangelistic, zealously missionary church in the Middle East is not easy. No Christian doubts the power

of Christ's spirit to impel his church with witnessing power in obedience to his commission, but the obstacles standing in the way must be realistically appraised. Among these are: (1) the social solidarity of the Muslim community, and the legal and political restrictions against change of religion where Islam is both a religion and a state; (2) the widespread minority psychology of the Christians of the Middle East; (3) the continued flow of emigration to the larger cities, or to America and elsewhere of many of the most active and ambitious members of the churches in the Middle East.

The most difficult part of becoming a Christian for the former Muslim anywhere in the Middle East is the abandonment of the security, sociability, and sense of significance that the Islamic community gives. A convert to the Christian faith may be disinherited by his family, ostracized by his friends, and dismissed from his job. In many cases none or not all of these results take place, but in some other instances there may be actual danger to the "apostate's" life. Even under the best circumstances there is always the feeling of "passing through dark valleys of loneliness and helplessness," as one Christian leader described his own experience after conversion. The new Christian needs not simply the nurturing fellowship of the church, but in a way not known in most countries of the West, a new sense of community to which he really belongs.

To some converts, a church has extended a magnificent fellowship, surrounding them with love and concern and social integration. Unfortunately, however, there are many examples of a lack of this fellowship that the new Christian most needs. Often he is chilled by an atmosphere of unconcern or suspicion. The existence of such attitudes seriously hampers the missionary effectiveness of the Evangelical churches.

One new Christian, whose conversion happened to be an isolated individual experience, discovered an Evangelical church made up largely of persons who had been refugees from persecutions in southern Turkey during World War I. The new Christian on his visit to this church was thrilled to hear the preacher take as his text the Great Commission of Jesus (Matt. 28:10-20) and give a ringing missionary message. The heart of the convert was warmed by such a fellowship, but after the service he was informed at the door that Muslims and people of Muslim background were not welcome in the church. So deep run the suspicions, the fears, and the ingrown self-absorption engendered by persecution, massacres, refugee flights, and minority discriminations! Christians nurtured in the free atmosphere of the West must be not only critical but deeply understanding and constructively sympathetic with these attitudes.

Some missionaries believe that the only way to develop a genuine evangelistic zeal and a readiness of welcome is first to create separate church groups made up of new

Christians as a demonstration and challenge to the older churches. Other missionaries believe that the younger generation in even the more cautious and backward churches can be trained so that a new psychology will permeate the atmosphere of these churches in the future. They suggest that young people be enlisted in activities of Christian witness and evangelism, and brought into experiences of fellowship with Christians of other backgrounds through conferences, work camps, and rallies.

A promising indication of growing fellowship and understanding between Christians of old-church background and new convert Christians in Iraq and the Persian Gulf area was the Basrah Conference on Christian Unity held in February, 1954. Delegates from a dozen scattered, isolated Christian groups from Mosul to Muscat found themselves, in some cases for the first time, in a company of fellow-Christians larger than their own local group. One of the older Christians, after getting acquainted with several converts from Islam, commented that "the circle of our vision has been too small." Out of this conference have come plans for the development of an organized church in Iraq and the Persian Gulf area.

Fortunately, shining examples offer the promise of developing a genuine missionary approach. A recent report from one church in Iran in which thirteen new Christians were baptized in the preceding year pointed

out that eleven of these thirteen came to their new faith entirely through the witness of members of that church.

In another city a scrubwoman in the Christian hospital came to the missionary doctor one day and said that she wanted to become a Christian. He expressed some surprise, as she had not been participating in the literacy class and Bible study group. He asked her how she had come to her decision. She replied, "I have been watching the man who does the cooking down in the hospital kitchen, and have seen his unfailing good humor in the midst of noise and confusion. I have watched the woman down in the hospital laundry who is always so cheerful and kind. I have looked at the hospital buyer and observed his honesty and devotion. They are all Christians, and I want to be like them."

Probably anyone listing the evangelists would not have mentioned these three, but what effective Christians they really were! "Only a spiritually alert and missionary-minded national church can in the long run present the Christian message in a convincing way to the Muslim community, and provide a spiritual home for any who respond." [5]

DEVELOPING AN INDIGENOUS CHURCH

The missions from overseas in the Middle East have progressed beyond an earlier stage of nurture—and domination—of an infant Evangelical church. They are now

[5] Morrison, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

moving beyond the second stage: separating themselves from the church so that it will become truly autonomous and responsibly independent. Missions are today experimenting with a third stage—partnership with the church and joint administration of the work. The missionary from abroad no longer works apart from the Middle Eastern church. His activities—direct evangelism, service to human need, or educational leadership —are increasingly part of the total Christian program.

A fourth stage of complete integration of the mission organization with the church has been reached in Pakistan, where the Evangelical church is larger than in most sections. However, the optimum situation where all missionaries are fraternal workers—entirely in, with, and under the church—faces a number of difficulties in the Middle East as a whole.

In many cases the Evangelical church is as yet very small, limited in numbers, leadership, personnel for administrative tasks, and financial resources. An undue element of foreign leadership would be necessary for such a church to undertake the responsible administration of the whole scope of missionary witness. There would be the danger, actually, of reverting to the stage of missionary domination.

The small church, faced with many needs in its own life and in many cases not yet strongly persuaded of its missionary obligation, tends to divert both personnel and funds to its own program. It is likely to neglect the

outreaching mission to the non-Christian population in too great an absorption in other tasks. The churches and missions in the Middle East are wrestling with the problem of what stage or type of relationship can best strengthen the church and involve it responsibly and enthusiastically on the highway of the world Christian mission.

When the church is small, and where nationalistic emotions are intense, integration of too much in foreign funds and personnel may weaken the church's sense of responsibility and open the church to the undesirable charge of being a "foreign institution."

HOW CAN THE MISSION BE LESS FOREIGN?

The missions from overseas are endeavoring to counteract the Western-ness of their influence and the frequent suspicion that they are an arm of political imperialism. One way is by refusing the tempting offers of governmental funds, through such programs as the United States Point IV, for mission projects.

Another way is by stressing the increasing prominence of Middle Eastern leadership in what have been formerly "foreign" institutions or agencies. A number of mission schools and colleges have national principals, as well as faculties. The excellent nursing school at the Kennedy Memorial Hospital in Tripoli, Lebanon, is carried on exclusively by highly trained Lebanese nurses.

Where adequate national leaders are not available, serious efforts are being made to enlist and train personnel who can move into the positions of highest responsibility.

A third means of counteracting the made-in-America label is to provide missionaries and fraternal workers from other parts of the world. Christians from Asia and Africa are living advertisements of the worldwide reality of the Christian church. Negotiations have been started to obtain Filipino nurses and teachers for Iran. Even temporary visits and fellowship missions by non-Western Christians are helpful. The Evangelical Coptic Church (formerly Synod of the Nile) has already sent a missionary to the South Sudan. It is hoped that the churches of the Middle East can in the future join in the expansion of ecumenical mission not only by receiving but by sending missionaries to other areas of the world.

A fourth way is by a humble willingness on the part of the missionary to serve at the invitation and direction of the Middle Eastern church. This can be done in a variety of ways. A missionary evangelist in Muscat has centered his attention on the promotion of stewardship in the congregation there. This little church is far from self-supporting and still relies on the missionary pastor, but sustained education, Bible study, and encouragement have changed the attitudes of this group of young Christians. Rather than expecting to receive everything

from outside, they have become faithful givers of a tithe to the Lord. They have been able to support a former teacher in a sanatorium in India, have paid the expenses of their own delegates to church conferences, and have developed a spirit of sturdy independence that is a stimulating example to every church in the Middle East. Other programs of stewardship education have recently been launched in various churches.

Another missionary is a specialist in radio and audio-visual evangelism. Working under the auspices of the Near East Christian Council and with the Beirut College for Women radio recording studio, he is preparing for the day when facilities for Christian broadcasting may become more widely available to the churches in the Middle East. In addition, he is helping the wider church in Syria-Lebanon in the use of audio-visual aids for education and evangelism. These techniques touch many lives. The church in a little Christian village was packed one evening when a Biblical sound film was shown. The next day the Muslim mayor of a nearby village who had seen the film came back and said, "Please come to our village, too, because this Jesus ought to be for us as well!"

The church of Christ can never be purely "national." It is inevitably an ecumenical, supra-national, worldwide fellowship. The missionary from overseas can represent the encouragement of the worldwide Christian church and can fill a greatly needed role of helpfulness to the

small, struggling churches of the Middle East. At the same time, the missionary of the future must himself tread the pilgrim path in quest of a new humility, a new wisdom, and a new spirit of self-sacrifice if he is to represent the Christ whose cause he comes to serve.

THE MIDDLE EASTERN CHURCH AND THE WORLD MISSION HIGHWAY

It is easy to be discouraged at the slow progress of the church in the Middle East. As one contemplates the inertia of the ancient Eastern churches, or of the little Evangelical churches sometimes weakened by dissension among members of different linguistic, social, or religious backgrounds, one might despair of these churches. How could they contribute to the emergence of the Middle Eastern peoples from their present turmoil of conflict and confusion? But such despair ignores the evidence of stalwart faith and splendid loyalty, the resources of spiritual strength, and the potentialities in these churches—assets that God can surely use in the years ahead. The worldwide church of Jesus Christ has the responsibility of strengthening these qualities and helping them to develop to fruitful realization in the years ahead.

CHAPTER 8

Throughway into the Future

WHAT WILL THE FUTURE BRING TO THE MIDDLE EAST? NO other group in the world is more concerned about this question than the young men and women who live there. Many of them feel that the old order is already inadequate, but they are uncertain about trying new ways.

This discontented generation is sometimes quite superficial in analyzing the ills that beset them. A young Iranian who came to a religious discussion group conducted by a missionary said that he was not interested in Christianity but was trying to find out "what made Americans tick," the secret of their material success. One wonders how many of the thousands of Middle Eastern students who annually trek to the campuses of America's educational institutions are bound on this same quest.

Some young people are even more negative in their outlook. They seem to believe that if enough of the present structure of society can be destroyed, a better opportunity will emerge from the ruins.

Despair as well as bitterness rules others. Not long ago I asked a young Iranian Christian, a woman teacher, what the young people of Iran are thinking about these days—social progress, communism, the development of democracy, or what?

"They are thinking about suicide!" she replied. "They feel that the old system of control by the people of wealth and power will never give them a chance. They are disillusioned with communism. They are cynical about democracy. They wonder if anything is worth while." This particular young woman is far from feeling this way herself. Her devotion to the spread of education and to the strengthening of the church in Iran is a ray of hope that one wishes could be multiplied a thousandfold.

Many young people, of course, are not yet ready to despair. Not long ago George, a young man of Orthodox Christian background, was admitted as a patient to the Kennedy Memorial Hospital in Tripoli, Lebanon. Some members of the hospital staff who knew him slightly whispered the word that George was a Communist. Nevertheless the hospital evangelist made friends with him during the several weeks of his illness and convalescence, and gave him a copy of the New Testament to read.

One day George said to him, "I have always wanted to be good for something—and good for something beyond myself, in improving the life of people around me. I felt that communism was giving me this chance. But during my illness I have been doing a lot of thinking, and I have

come to the conclusion that communism, with its denial of human value and of human freedom, with its regimentation and violence, can never bring about a successful society. I've been reading the words of Jesus and thinking about his concern for the individual person and his emphasis on the way of love. I believe that it is his way, not the Communist way, that will really work."

THE DIRECTION OF THE MIDDLE EAST PILGRIMAGE

As the Middle East pilgrim stares down the roadway to the future, he is beset by questions. Will the road of nationalism lead to a better life? If so, which nationalism? That of the secular, Western-style nation? Or that of the traditional theocracy of Islam whose blend of religion and military power once ruled so much of the world?

If Islam is to be the road taken, which Islam? The old medieval system, set down in the law books of a millennium ago? Or the modern interpretation of Islamic principles in terms of the accepted moral, scientific, and psychological ideas current in the Western world?

If the Western way is to be chosen, which West? The secular, materialistic, technologically-minded West that, with all its power, seems to lack so much of moral principle and spiritual perception? Or will it be, in Dr. Charles Malik's words, "the truer image of the authentic West?" Dr. Malik has said that there are some Middle

Easterners who "believe that the flame of truth and justice and love at the heart of the West has not been and can never be extinguished, that the West they know and love has not died and can never die, that the real Christian spirit of the West—whereby the West means, or ought to mean, only to be helpful—will not fail, in God's time, to reassert itself, and that one day the West, when it awakens to itself, to its dangers and possibilities, will surely redress the injustice it has visited upon the Near East." [1]

Or are nationalism, Islam, and westernization all outdated by the progress of material forces in a super state that appears to dominate and control the evolution of human society? Does communism offer a roadway to a better life, providing the answers to the problems of humanity?

Will It Be Communism?

The religion of Islam is not an impregnable bulwark against communism. Although a devout, spiritually enlightened Muslim is basically opposed to atheistic materialism, vast numbers of Middle Easterners are not sufficiently religious for their faith to serve as a strong obstacle to communism's appeal. So many Muslims are nominal in their religion—if they have not abandoned it entirely—that they turn easily to listen to communism's promises. This readiness is true particularly of those who

[1] Frye, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.

are hungry, homeless, or hopeless, as many of the people of the Middle East are.

Some of the assumptions of Muslim thinking support rather than dispute Communist ideas. For example, both communism and Islam try to combine the temporal and the spiritual into a single organized form of society, emphasizing the solidarity of the community. The personal convictions of an individual are dictated not by his own conscience but by the political power.

Then too both systems are authoritarian, conditioning their adherents to unquestioning acceptance of the regime in power. No independent expression of opinion about the all-powerful state is permitted, and the state tends to suppress free criticism on any subject by the individual.

Both systems are optimistic about human nature, considering that evil is caused by the external circumstances of society rather than being embedded in the nature of man. Both systems stress worldwide brotherhood, but strictly within the bounds of their own party or faith.

Once he has relaxed his hold on a simple, sure faith in God, the ordinary Muslim is poorly equipped to withstand the appeal of the Communist system. If he does resist it, it is usually because of his desire to retain newly-won independence and his fear of Soviet imperialism.

Very few Middle Eastern advocates of communism are either acquainted or concerned with the philosophy of

Karl Marx. To them, communism is a convenient weapon to be used against what is left of Western colonialism. The Soviet Union publicizes itself as a champion against colonialism; this role constitutes one of its major threats to the Middle East.

It may not be too late for the West to counteract Communist propaganda and appeal. What are needed are a genuine helpfulness to the people of the Middle East and a sharing of their economic and social problems. But if the West seeks to maintain the old grip of colonial control (as in Algeria, for example); if the West is unable or unwilling to find a solution to the thorny Palestinian refugee problem; if the West puts all of its faith in military pacts, then it is entirely possible that communism will become the only road for the Middle East.

Will It Be Islam?

The direction of the Middle East pilgrimage probably will not be that of traditional Islam. Undoubtedly, Islam will continue to play a preponderant part for many generations to come, but it will be a modified, reformed, and modernized Islam. The difficulty of changing the rigid orthodoxy of traditional Islam is very great. The inertia of conservative tradition is strong. Nevertheless, the trend for the long future appears to be in favor of a gradual reformulation in modern terms.

The modern restatement of Islam is actually a combination of many traditional elements of Islam with certain

Western practices and Christian standards. The anachronisms of Islamic law and the silences of Islam's theology are being filled in with principles that have come directly from Christianity or indirectly from Western society. The swift change in modern Islam's view of the position of women is a striking example. The new Muslim reformer claims that the centuries of traditional seclusion and degradation of women in Islamic society were based on false interpretations of the original Koranic teaching. It is pointed out, for instance, that whereas Muhammad in the Koran allowed a man to have four wives, he added the condition that they all be treated equitably and justly (Koran, Surah 4:3). Several modern Muslim writers explain that since such treatment is manifestly impossible, Muhammad was in reality saying that a man should have but one wife.[2]

Another trend in modern Islam has been, in a way, quite foreign to the old orthodoxy. This has been the exaltation and veneration of the person of Muhammad, largely in imitation of Christian views of Christ. A hymn celebrating the birth of Muhammad has been sung in Lebanon in recent years at the season of the Prophet's birthday. The tune—"Hark the herald angels sing"! Lives of Muhammad have been written, with distinct borrowings from the tone and actual incidents of the New Testament Gospels.

[2] See Gibb, H.A.R. *Modern Trends in Islam.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947, pp. 96-97, 135.

Traditional Islam may be expected to fight strongly against modern adaptation. Orthodox leaders fear that reformulation means the ultimate disintegration of Islam. The end product, they say, will not be Islam at all, but a pale imitation and ineffective rival of other faiths. They may be right. Others believe the exact opposite, that if Islam is to survive it must change. Some hope to change the outward form while retaining the inward essence. The battle within the ranks of Islam is joined and it will be a long campaign.

Aiding the conservatives are forces of militant political nationalism, such as found in the once powerful Muslim Brotherhood and similar organizations. This movement is largely a religio-political reaction against the West.

Will It Be the West?

The present pilgrimage of the Middle Eastern peoples will probably not move toward immediate or wholesale adoption of the ways, institutions, and culture of the West. However, if Western governments outgrow impulses toward economic or political domination, and if Western public opinion develops a more balanced concern for the welfare of *all* the people in the Middle East, the vast tide of Western influence will undoubtedly be accelerated. With this enlarged flow may come the deeper currents of moral sensitivity and spiritual faith that are true of the West at its best.

It is probably safe to say that the Middle East will

gradually turn toward a synthesis of its own traditions, forms, customs, and ideas with many influences of Western thought and life. Such a synthesis offers tremendous opportunities for the Christian church.

THE KEY ROLE OF CHRISTIANITY

Christianity is Middle Eastern in its origin, its continuity, and its present existence. But Christianity is also Western in much of its historical development; indeed its ideas have been the creative force in much of Western progress. Thus Christianity is remarkably qualified to play a part in the lives of people who are trying to combine Middle Eastern heritage and Western advancement.

What in particular does Christianity have to offer to the developing life of the Middle East? Its contribution will probably not be in the form of large numbers of quickly-won converts. Religious and political opposition is at present too strong for that. The church will have to prove itself over the years and in the practice of life. But if the synthesis of Middle Eastern society with Western ways moves forward, there will grow with it a more stable independence and a broader maturity among the nations. Then there will be greater freedom and opportunity for Christianity to make its values known.

Christianity certainly will not provide a detailed blueprint for society or an exact diagram of political organization. At its best Christian thought believes that no hu-

man state can fully embody the whole truth of man's potentiality and destiny under God. Islam and communism both offer a philosophy of state-organized society. By comparison Christianity appears to be vague, otherworldly, irrelevant. For just this reason, idealistic and eager young people in the Middle East often ignore or reject Christianity. Instead they tend to look for immediate action, political and economic organization, social change in concrete and enforceable patterns here and now.

Christians have a hard job in trying to persuade others that Christianity's unwillingness to identify itself with any political state is part of its greatness and its glory. The church of Jesus Christ is "the society of the redeemed," a fellowship of repentance, commitment, and renewal. Therefore it must stand within, and not identical with, society as a whole, representing the redemptive power of God.[3]

On the positive side, there are three especially pertinent contributions—out of many—that Christians can offer to the pilgrim people of the Middle East in the critical years that lie ahead.

The Demonstration of Moral Principle

All over the Middle East thoughtful and patriotic people are concerned about the prevalence of corruption in government and unscrupulous self-seeking in business,

[3] See Cragg, *op. cit.*, pp. 319-327.

land ownership, and the professions. They long for a society of whose moral character they may be proud. They fear that all the aspects of social reform—land distribution, community development, industrial expansion, civil service reform—may fail because of an insufficient supply of persons of reliable character. They are impressed by, and in most cases gratefully accept, the material improvements provided by agencies from abroad or their own governments. But at the same time the fear haunts them that in the end these programs will not work because of the scarcity of men of character.

Western governmental and private agencies of improvement are silent about this vital element of progress. The West seems to take it for granted that the requisite character will be there. The Middle East is not so sure.

Unfortunately, a great deal of Western influence flooding into the Middle East does not inspire the development of good character. Almost twenty years ago, when visiting in the home of an Iranian student, I idly leafed through a pile of magazines on the living room table, and then realized that every one was an American movie magazine. American Christians have a responsibility for bringing a witness to the best in American life, to insure that America is exporting her best treasure of high moral principle. Without this influence, other Western ideas can be harmful. For instance, the rapid emancipation of women in the Middle East brings great dangers when it is unaccompanied by the ideals of Christian family life.

It is significant that many modern spokesmen for Islam have incorporated large amounts of Christian ethics into their interpretation of Islamic moral standards. One new Christian testified that his conversion was a result of observing two demonstrations by Christians of truly disinterested honesty. One was that of a widow who refused to make a false affidavit regarding her husband's death, though she was urged to do so since the entire estate of her deceased husband seemed to hang in the balance. The other was that of a servant girl, faced with the probability of eviction from her home, who refused to perjure herself though ordered to do so by the Muslim official who was trying to help her.

The Foundation of Moral Principle

George Washington in his Farewell Address expressed the conviction that morality and religion are the indispensable supports of political prosperity. He went on to say, "And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. . . . Reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

Thoughtful non-Christians, appraising the success of Christian schools in character training, are often aware that good character is rooted in sound convictions of religious faith. One non-Christian, commenting on the protest of another parent with regard to the teaching of

Bible in a mission school, said, "Where does he think the character taught to these students comes from?"

Islam has never known a system of principles that has been inspired by a God of goodness and love. To Muslims, ethical teachings are simply the arbitrary decrees of a God who is too absolute to be limited by any inherent character. The Eastern church, with its emphasis on ceremony, has frequently obscured the moral reality of God as the basis for Christian action. Christians in the Middle East have the duty not only of demonstrating moral principle in practical deeds of human life but of explaining their belief that moral principles cannot be separated from the Christian understanding of God.

This means the uncompromising presentation of God's nature as disclosed in Jesus Christ. Although Islam venerates Jesus as one of the greatest of the prophets, it has never known the real Jesus. In the Koran he is only a shadowy figure who at the end—in order to fit the doctrinaire assumption that a sovereign God cannot for any reason suffer failure—escaped from the Cross. Islam does not know the Christ who incarnates in himself, in his life and death and resurrection, the redeeming power and the reconciling love of God. Nothing short of the full glory of God, in Christ "made flesh, full of grace and truth," in Christ "reconciling the world to himself," can develop the kind of character that is needed in the life of the Middle East.

A Christian evangelist, brought up in Islam, one day

visited one of the wild tribes in the Kurdish mountains. He was arrested by a sentry and brought before a fierce, grim-visaged old chieftain of the tribe. The chief threatened him with death in the manner ordained by tribal tradition for unwanted visitors—by being tied to a pack of wild dogs and dragged across the gravel hills. The evangelist listened silently to this threat, with a smile on his face. The old chief was surprised and said, "Why aren't you afraid?" The answer came, "Because I serve a Master who has promised his followers that he will always be with them and therefore they need never be afraid." The chief was so impressed that he invited the evangelist to stay and dine in his tent, and to speak that evening to the assembled tribe. What an opportunity for the Christian message!

Whether in the display of kindness, or honesty, or courage, Christian character is based on faith in the kind of God whom Christ taught by word and exemplified in life. The personal commitment of the genuine Christian, his vital faith in the God made known in Jesus Christ, is the unique contribution that Christianity can make to the life of the Middle East.

The responsibility for this contribution lies not simply with Middle Eastern Christians or with missionaries, but with every Christian visitor and temporary resident in the Middle East.

Missionaries in many parts of the world are used to seeing their labors undercut by Westerners whose con-

duct is a reproach to Christianity. Other Westerners, however well they act, seem to believe that they gain the respect of Muslims if they keep discreetly silent about any religious convictions they may have. Exactly the opposite is true. Contempt is earned by the Christian in Muslim lands who soft-pedals or by-passes his Christian faith. Readings from the Koran or fulsome praise of Muhammad in radio broadcasts by the Voice of America or the British Broadcasting Corporation are widely regarded by Middle Easterners as unworthy hypocrisy. They tend to create more cynicism than good will in the minds of Muslim people.

A recent book about America, written in Persian by a devout Muslim, praises highly the religious devotion shown by Americans. The author cites the fact that crowds of the leading American diplomatic, military, and business personnel may be seen every Sunday entering the Evangelical church in Tehran where the services of the Community Church are held. He comments that these Christians are more "submissive" to God (the root meaning of the word "Muslim") than most so-called Muslims. Such genuine Christian witness powerfully demonstrates that Christianity makes religion relevant to daily life.

Truth Will Emerge Where Liberty Prevails

Another distinctive contribution that Christianity can make to the people of the Middle East is the conviction that religious liberty leads to truth and progress. Islam

has attempted to reinforce religious obedience with the sanctions of the civil state; the religious and civil communities are one. Therefore religious apostasy and civil treason are regarded as one. The whole traditional totalitarian solidarity of the Muslim community has denied its members the privilege of religious liberty.

Under Islam's *millet* system, it has often been said, Christians were granted "freedom of religion." Actually this freedom was only to worship and practice their religion in the community tradition in which they were born. For Muslims, too, there has been only a "freedom to remain." Indeed, Muslims have been less free than the minorities, for the minority member has always been able to change to Islam. There has been no such freedom for the Muslim to change his faith.

So confined is the Muslim that in some countries of the Middle East a follower of Islam who changed his religion would in effect be tearing up his birth certificate, citizenship papers or passport, voting registration, and work permit, and would become like a man without a country. In other lands the legal provisions have not been as rigid, but genuine religious liberty has nowhere been in effect.

A number of the modern constitutions of Middle Eastern nations pay at least lip service to freedom of religion. Almost all of these, however, declare that such freedom is circumscribed by the interests of "public order and good morals," a phrase capable of flexible interpretation.

None have gone so far as the clause in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which reads: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. This right includes the freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in a community with others, and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in teaching, practice, worship, and observance." It is reported that in the debate on this clause in the United Nations, one representative from the Muslim world protested against the phrase "freedom to change his religion," remarking that if this were put into effect, "Islam would be done for."

Many Middle Easterners are uneasy about the denial of freedom of movement and liberty of conscience in the traditional Islamic community. They wonder if state protection or promotion of one religion may impede the progress of both the state and the religion. They question whether the highest patriotism is possible in a state that classifies its citizens and discriminates against some of them on the basis of religious faith. They ask if any religion can maintain a self-respecting position unless it stands on its own merits, unsupported by a state.

Modern Muslims turn to the Koran to ask if state guardianship over the religious views of individual citizens is essentially Islamic. They read Surah 2:257, "There is no compulsion in religion." They see in Surah 5:120 the strong hint that the destruction of false belief is not the business of men: "These, too, were pre-

cepts desired by God, and those who believed wrongly would one day render an account to God of their error." They consider a traditional but unauthenticated saying of Muhammad, "Difference of opinion in any community is a [manifestation of divine] mercy." [4] A crucial debate is in process within Islam. It is possible that the people of the Middle East will come to see that only as men are free to think daringly will the Middle East move forward.

Despite frequent restrictions the Christian can find some opportunities for witness. Recent events have almost completely abolished the old system whereby missionaries and national Christians were protected by foreign powers. One Middle Eastern Christian recently said, "Now Christ is on his own. He is free to make his appeal to the Middle Eastern mind and heart unhampered by the shadow of foreign governmental protection."

In this environment, Christians must improve their grasp on the truth that they believe, not for the sake of winning arguments, but as a means of introducing their faith attractively to others. The new Study Center Program in the Middle East, led by Dr. Kenneth Cragg under the auspices of the Near East Christian Council, promises to be exceedingly helpful in this regard. Since its beginning in the fall of 1956, Dr. Cragg has visited most of the countries of the area, holding institutes and

[4] Bates, M. Searle. *Religious Liberty, an Inquiry.* New York: International Missionary Council, 1945, p. 257. Used by permission.

setting up local study programs. This movement will help the church in the Middle East to proclaim the "ringing positive message" that Dr. Charles Malik called for at the meeting of the World Council of Churches at Evanston in 1954.

The Christians of North America and other Christian lands can help Middle Easterners understand the values of religious liberty by making them aware of what such liberty can mean. One obvious way is by showing hospitality to visitors from the Middle East. There are many instances that prove the value of Christian families welcoming foreign students of different faiths in their homes and taking them to church, as almost anyone who has lived in the Middle East can testify.

One evening Ali, a student recently returned to the Middle East after two years of study in America, was walking the streets of his native city. He had hoped to improve his country by putting into practice many of the ideals and techniques learned in his study, but he was discouraged by many obstacles. As he walked along a quiet street, Ali suddenly heard the strains of a hymn that he had come to know when Christian friends in America had taken him to church. He turned in at an Evangelical church, where he heard a message about the steadfast courage Christ gives to those who seek to make life better. Thereafter Ali came regularly to this church where he had found the encouragement to maintain his highest ideals.

THE OPPORTUNITY OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

The Evangelical Christian, with his freely chosen personal faith and as a member of a church with a democratic form of government, can be an eloquent demonstrator in the Middle East of the value of religious liberty. This is especially true if he uses his liberty as an opportunity for courageous thought and witness.

A young man named Rahim, formerly a Muslim, had become a Christian. He was a student in his country's military academy. His proficiency in English led the professor to appoint him as substitute language teacher during the instructor's absence. Rahim, who was an enthusiastic witness to his new faith, asked the professor if he cared what material was used for reading exercises and suggested the New Testament. The professor told him to use anything he chose. Several of the students became so interested in what they were reading that after Rahim's temporary assignment had ended they organized a voluntary class with him to continue studying the gospel.

The Evangelical Christian, with his understanding of the moral character and purpose of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, can be a living witness to the Way of truth and life. He can display social vision and human sympathy and concern. He can participate in some form of practical Christian service that will influence countless

persons who tend to despair of human goodness or genuine social reform.

An elder in one of the Evangelical churches in Lebanon is a prominent lawyer, a graduate of the American University of Beirut, a leader in the Y.M.C.A., a member of several school boards, and an active participant in other Christian student work. He speaks Arabic, French, and English with equal facility. One day I asked him what language he thinks in.

"It depends on what I am thinking about," he replied. "I think about ordinary, everyday affairs in Arabic, about legal and political matters in French, and about cultural and religious ideas in English!"

A Muslim friend one day commented on the tireless service that this elder gives in so many activities for the good of others, and said, "I wish that my religion meant as much to me as his evidently does to him."

The Evangelical church has a responsibility for guiding national thought and policy in the field of social welfare, and in the non-violent crusade for social and economic reform. Many forward-looking Middle Easterners are waiting only for the appearance of such positive leadership to take their place of service.

The most valuable contribution the Evangelical Christian can make to the Middle East is to help his church become vigorously missionary and zealously evangelistic.

During the recent observance of a Year of Evangelism by the church in Iran, training classes were held in local

churches. One of the women members of such a class became a patient in the local Christian hospital. One of her friends, also a member of the class, came to visit her in her room. As they were talking, they became aware of the patient in the other bed. They made friends with her, learned she was not a Christian, and because of their study of evangelism were able to make a warm, natural, and effective witness to their faith in Christ.

A woman in another city, who had become a Christian several years before and had maintained a wonderfully warm glow of Christian conviction, was invited to tell the story of her conversion at a church women's association meeting. At the end of her inspiring story, she said, "I ought not to be here telling this story to you who are Christians and you ought not to be here listening. All of us ought to be out telling of our Christian faith to our non-Christian friends."

In the long run, the values of Christianity will not succeed in penetrating the life of the Middle East merely by permeating society with high ideals. Such an influence can be effective only as it comes from a glowing, growing, Spirit-filled church. The individual Christian can do his part by eagerness and sensitivity in personal witness, by faithfully working in every evangelistic effort in the church, and by sincere willingness to make his church a glad and welcoming fellowship, a community of love to which each new Christian will be proud and satisfied to belong.

Throughway into the Future

The Christian fellowship of the Evangelical churches in the Middle East has been growing year by year. These national churches have in most cases become members of the World Council of Churches and of the Near East Christian Council. They have also joined together in an advance program, part of the total cooperative movement of the Near East Christian Council, with the theme "Christ Calls the Churches of the Middle East to Mission and Unity." A significant conference in Beirut in April, 1955, brought together national Christian representatives from all over the Middle East. It is expected that this closer coordination and growing sense of unity among the Evangelical churches of the area will develop further in the coming years.

THE PATIENCE OF THE PILGRIM

A primary obstacle to the Christian cause in the Middle East is the frequent temptation to be discouraged by the gap between present reality and future opportunity. Such discouragement is not new. An early Christian history tells of a missionary named Mari who was sent from Edessa by the East Syrian Church to Seleucia in Mesopotamia. He found the people quite unresponsive and "wrote to those who had sent him, saying, 'The inhabitants are worthless heathen. I am not able to do any good. I shall return to you or go elsewhere.' His fellow Christians, however, would not agree, and wrote to him that he must 'sow and till those hills and mountains so

that they might bring forth fruit for an offering to the Lord.' He continued at his post, and his efforts were crowned with such success that large numbers of the people of the province of Adiabene became followers of Christ." [5]

In the present ferment in the Middle East there can be no safe prediction of the future. But it is at least possible that the Middle East pilgrimage will lead to a larger freedom and to a fuller welfare for all the people. A prominent Muslim citizen of Tehran, distinguished by his pioneering devotion to many projects of social welfare, remarked that the important thing in all such enterprises—a mental hospital, an orphanage, a trade school for those who would otherwise be beggars—is to *care* for the individual person concerned. He said, "You cannot do anything for them unless you love them," and then he added, "This is what we were taught by my professor in the mission college: 'Where love is, there is God also!' " This man's feet have found the true pathway of the pilgrimage.

The Christian church as a whole holds a substantial responsibility for the future of the Middle East. The Christians of the world are in reality fellow-pilgrims with the people of the Middle East. In the influence of Christians in the policies of their governments, in the volume and quality of Christian witness and mercy along

[5] Stewart, John. *Nestorian Missionary Enterprise—The Story of a Church on Fire.* Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928.

the highway of the world mission of the church, in the enlistment of dedicated Christian lives to serve in the Middle East, in personal friendship with the people of these lands, Christians everywhere are called to join the march of the Middle East pilgrimage. As they do so they face a creative opportunity for helping this pilgrimage into the future. The way may be long. Dr. Charles Malik has said of the prospects of Christianity in the Middle East that he is pessimistic for the decade but optimistic for the century. The task of Christians is not to shorten the highway, but only to make it straight, so that it will lead on to the goal through desert and wilderness.

On the rocky cliffs above the mouth of the Dog River in Lebanon, where its clear, cold water flows into the Mediterranean Sea a few miles north of Beirut, there are many rock-cut inscriptions celebrating the victorious march of such ancient conquerors as Ramses II, Esarhaddon, Nebuchadnezzar, and Caracalla. Modern inscriptions tell of Napoleon III, of World Wars I and II, and of the evacuation of foreign troops in 1946, marking the full attainment of Lebanon's national independence. More recently, high on an opposite cliff, a colossal statue of Christ has been raised over a home for the aged. Its outstretched arms recall no aging glories, no dead conquerors, no crumbling documents of state, but rather an immortal strength and the One who unfailingly reaches out in mercy and healing to make real to men his promise of a more abundant life.

Appendices

APPENDIX A

Branches, Sects, and Derivatives of Islam

I. ORTHODOX OR SUNNITE

This is the main body of Islam. About 80 per cent of all Muslims are Sunnites, followers of the accepted Sunnah or "Tradition" which is composed of the Koran and the *hadith*, or traditional oral accounts of Muhammad's life and sayings.

II. HETERODOX SECTS

1. *Shiite.* This is the most important of the heterodox sects of Islam. The Shiah or "Party" arose when supporters of Ali, Muhammad's son-in-law, claimed for him and his descendants both the right of political rule and the divine inspiration and endowment of spiritual leadership. These descendants in the direct line from Muhammad, including Husain, the son of Ali who was martyred in A.D. 680, are called imams, "religious leaders." The line of imams ended with the twelfth, a boy who disappeared in A.D. 878 and is expected to reappear in the future as the Mahdi or "guided one." Almost the entire population of Iran, about half the people of Iraq, and scattered groups elsewhere are Shiites.

2. *Ismaili.* This offshoot of the Shiite beliefs springs from those who gave their adherence to Ismail, a brother of the usually acknowledged seventh in the line of twelve imams. This group produced the famous "Order of the Assassins." The Aga Khan is the head of the Ismaili sect, most of whom today are in India and Pakistan.

3. *Druze.* A further offshoot of the Shiite and Ismaili views. They believe that the Fatimid ruler of Egypt, al-Hakim (996-1021) was the incarnation of the Deity. Their first great missionary was named al-Darazi. They are a secret society, now a non-missionary, self-enclosed community, living mostly in Syria and Lebanon.

4. *Nusayri or Alawi.* This group, living in northwestern Syria, also has a secret religion composed of extreme Shiite views combined with certain pagan and Christian ideas and practices.

5. *Zaydi.* This is a more conservative Shiite sect which constitutes the dominant group in Yemen.

6. *Wahhabi.* This sect is at the opposite extreme from the Shiite. It is a militantly puritan and conservative movement in Islam. It flourished in Central Arabia in the early years of the nineteenth century, and still is the dominant religious force in Saudi Arabia.

7. *Ibadi.* An older conservative sect, found in somewhat different form in Oman and in North Africa. It is a remnant of a primitive puritan movement in Islam.

III. Bahaism

This may be called a derivative religion rather than a sect of Islam. Originally known as Babism, it developed from extreme Shiite and Ismaili views in the middle of the nineteenth century. The movement was persecuted in its homeland of Iran, and its leaders moved to Turkey and later to Acre in Palestine. A beautiful temple in Wilmette, Ill. and another in Los Angeles are the centers of the Bahai religion in America.

IV. Notable Movements

1. *Sufism* is a widespread mystical movement in Islam. Literally a sufi is one who wears a garment of white wool. Sufi orders, such as the dervishes, have played a conspicuous part in the religious life of Islam, stressing a mystical experience and a closer, warmer personal relationship with God.

2. *The Ahmadiya movement.* This is a modern, liberal, strongly missionary sect which originated in India in 1879. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claimed to be both the Mahdi and the Messiah. He taught that Jesus was taken down from the cross before death, recovered, migrated to India, and eventually died in Kashmir. This movement emphasizes the modern reformulation of Islamic teachings and traditions, and has been distinguished by its zealous missionary propaganda in Southeast Asia, Europe, and America.

APPENDIX B

Divisions of the Ancient Eastern Church

I. Eastern Orthodox

1. *Greek Orthodox.* This is the original national church of the Eastern Roman or Byzantine empire. Various branches of this church are self-governing but are in communion with one another. The patriarchate of Constantinople is recognized as the chief one, and the Church of Greece is under its authority. There are also patriarchates of Antioch (Syria and Lebanon), Alexandria, and Jerusalem. There is a Metropolitan Church of Cyprus. The Russian and Balkan Orthodox churches are additional branches.

2. *Nestorian* (Assyrian). The Church of the East was once a great church, extending in the Middle Ages across Persia into India and Central Asia as far as China. The views of the church

that the two natures of Christ—human and divine—are not co-equal was a subject of dispute for almost half a century and were twice pronounced heretical. Only the small group of so-called Assyrians, mainly in Iran, Iraq, and Syria, remain of this once mighty missionary church, which because of the simplicity of its practice has been called the "Protestantism" of the ancient church.

3. *Syrian Orthodox.* This church is known as "Jacobite" from one of its early missionaries, Jacob Bardaeus, who died about 578. Its Monophysitic doctrine (that the human and the divine in Christ are one) opposed the main orthodox church of the Byzantine empire. There are small groups in Lebanon, Syria, southern Turkey, and Iraq. It is also the main affiliation of the so-called Syrian or Malabar Christians of South India.

4. *Coptic.* This is the old national Church of Egypt. It and its Ethiopic neighbor are the largest of the ancient churches in the territory of the Middle East today. It is also Monophysite in doctrine.

5. *Ethiopic.* The Ethiopian Church, similar to the Coptic in doctrine and tradition, is the national Church of Ethiopia.

6. *Armenian* (Gregorian). This is the national Armenian Church. The Armenians claim to be the first nation to become completely Christian. This church is Monophysite in doctrine. Since the Turkish massacres, the largest concentration of Armenians are in the Soviet Union.

II. Roman Catholic of Eastern Rite

A growing political separation between the Eastern and Western halves of the Roman empire resulted by 1054 in the distinct and lasting division between the Greek Orthodox Church, with its center in Constantinople, and the Roman Catholic Church, which claimed the primacy for its own Bishop of Rome.

1. There are a few regular Roman Catholics or "Latins" in Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon. Most of these are immigrants

or recent adherents, although there have been churches of the "Latin rite" in these lands since the days of the Crusades.

2. *Maronite.* This church began as a Syrian nationalist protest against the Byzantine church, and adopted the Monothelite heresy. It is named for a legendary St. Marun. In 1181 the church disavowed its old doctrinal views and submitted to the Roman Pope, affiliating as a whole with Rome. This arrangement was further confirmed in 1516, although the church retained its Syriac liturgy. The Maronite Church is the majority Christian group in Lebanon.

3. *Uniate Churches.* Roman Catholic missionary endeavors in the Middle East through the centuries have been aimed largely at the ingathering into the Roman fold of the ancient Eastern churches and their adherents. From time to time segments of the various Eastern Orthodox churches have split off from the main bodies and affiliated with Rome. Accommodation of doctrine to the Roman Catholic system and acknowledgment of the supremacy of the Roman Pope are the two requirements for Uniate status. Autonomy is granted to the uniting church in matters of liturgy, language, church government, and customary forms. Several of the Uniate churches maintain a married clergy and have their own system of priests and higher officials. The main Uniate churches, together with the usually accepted date of their affiliation with Rome, are as follows:

(a) Chaldean or Kaldani, from the Nestorian Church, partial affiliation in 1551 and complete in 1681.

(b) Greek Catholic, from the Greek Orthodox Church, 1724.

(c) Coptic Catholic, from the Coptic Church, 1732.

(d) Syrian Catholic, from the Syrian Orthodox (Jacobite) Church, 1783.

(e) Armenian Catholic, from the Armenian Orthodox (Gregorian) Church, some groups as early as 1439, but mostly in the eighteenth century.

APPENDIX C

Evangelical Churches and Missions in the Middle East, Past and Present

Unfortunately it is impossible in this brief catalogue to mention the many small, independent missions and related congregations whose earnest efforts are also important to the total work for God's kingdom. The listing of contemporary work includes for the most part the boards and agencies given in the new edition of the *World Christian Handbook.* (Dates refer to the first effort of the indicated board if made before 1900.)

1. NORTH AFRICA (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia). *North American Societies:* Methodist; Seventh-day Adventist. *British and Other Societies:* Algiers Mission Band, 1888; Bible Churchmen's Missionary Society; North Africa Mission, 1880's; Plymouth Brethren (later Christian Missions in Many Lands), 1880's; Southern Morocco Mission, 1888. *Churches:* There are numerous French Protestant congregations and several Methodist churches.

2. EGYPT. *North American Societies:* American Mission, 1854 (United Presbyterian); Assemblies of God; Canadian Holiness; Church of God; Peniel Missionary Society; Seventh-day Adventist; Standard Church of America. *British and Other Societies:* Church Missionary Society (Anglican), 1825-65, 1882-1956; Christian Missions in Many Lands; Egypt General Mission, 1898; the Nile Mission Press. *Churches:* Evangelical Coptic Church (formerly Synod of the Nile—United Presbyterian); and Episcopal Church in Egypt (Anglican).

3. ETHIOPIA AND THE SUDAN. *North American Societies:* American Lutheran; Seventh-day Adventist; United Evangelical Lutheran; United Presbyterian. *British and Other Societies:* Church Missionary Society, 1830's; Swedish Lutheran,

1866 (additional Lutheran missions from Germany and Scandinavia and most recently from the United States); Sudan Interior Mission. *Churches:* Episcopal Church in Egypt (Anglican); Episcopal Church in the Sudan; Lutheran; Evangelical (United Presbyterian).

4. ISRAEL (for Palestine, see below). *North American Societies:* American Friends Service Committee; Assemblies of God; Christian and Missionary Alliance; Mennonite Board of Missions; Seventh-day Adventist; and Southern Baptist Convention. *British and Other Societies:* British Jews' Society; Church Mission to Jews (Anglican); Church of Scotland; Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society; Jerusalem and the East Mission; and several Scandinavian Lutheran missions. *Churches:* Arab Evangelical Episcopal Church (Anglican); several Lutheran congregations; and a number of Hebrew Christian congregations.

5. JORDAN. *North American Societies:* Assemblies of God; Church of the Nazarene; Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions; Lutheran World Federation; Society of Friends; and Southern Baptist. *British and Other Societies:* Church Missionary Society. *Churches:* Arab Evangelical Episcopal (Anglican); Lutheran; and Friends.

6. LEBANON AND SYRIA. *North American Societies:* American Board of Commissioners, 1823 (work assigned to Presbyterian, U.S.A., 1870); Assemblies of God; Christian and Missionary Alliance; Church of God; Church of the Nazarene; Lutheran World Federation; Reformed Presbyterian; Seventh-day Adventist; Southern Baptist; and United Missionary Society. *British and Other Societies:* Action Chrétienne en Orient; British Syrian Mission, 1860; Danish Orient Mission; Friends Service Council; and Irish and Scotch Reformed Presbyterian. *Churches:* Arab Evangelical Episcopal Church (Anglican); Synod of Evangelical Churches of Syria and Lebanon; United Evangelical Church; Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East. Aleppo College is a union institution sponsored by Presbyterian and Congregational missions and by

Evangelical and Union Armenian churches. The Near East School of Theology in Beirut is also a union institution with the same sponsors plus the Arab Episcopal Church.

7. CYPRUS. *North American Societies:* American Board of Commissioners, 1836; Reformed Presbyterian. There are several Protestant Armenian churches.

8. TURKEY. *North American Societies:* American Board of Commissioners, 1826; and Seventh-day Adventist. There are several Protestant Armenian churches in Istanbul and other Evangelical churches in southern Turkey.

9. IRAN. *North American Societies:* American Board of Commissioners, 1834 (succeeded by Presbyterian, U.S.A.); Assemblies of God; International Missions, Inc. (includes former Iran Interior Mission). *British and Other Societies:* Church Missionary Society, 1869. *Churches:* Episcopal Church of Iran (Anglican); Evangelical Church of Iran.

10. IRAQ. *North American Societies:* Lutheran Orient Mission Society; Reformed Church in America, 1891; Seventh-day Adventist; United Mission in Iraq (American Board of Commissioners, Evangelical and Reformed, Presbyterian, U.S., Presbyterian, U.S.A., Reformed Church in America). *British and Other Societies:* Church Missionary Society, 1880's; Near East and Arabian Mission (New Zealand Anglican). *Churches:* There are several congregations but a larger organized church is still only in the conference stage.

11. ARABIA (including Aden, Bahrain, Muscat, Kuwait). *North American Societies:* Reformed Church in America, 1892; Southern Baptist. *British and Other Societies:* Danish Missionary Society (Lutheran); Sudan Interior Mission. *Churches:* Congregations belonging to Church of Scotland; Episcopal Church in the Sudan (Anglican); there are no missions in Saudi Arabia or Yemen.

12. WEST PAKISTAN. *North American Societies:* Methodist; Presbyterian, U.S.A.; Reformed-Presbyterian; United Presbyterian. *British and Other Societies:* Church Missionary So-

ciety; Church of Scotland. *Churches:* There is now a United Church of Pakistan; the Lahore Diocese (Anglican) covers India as well as Pakistan. The Gujranwala United Theological Seminary is supported by the American boards working in West Pakistan as well as by the Lahore Diocese and the Church of Scotland.

13. PALESTINE. Current work in this area included under Israel and Jordan above. This paragraph is included for historical reference only. *North American Societies:* American Board of Commissioners, 1821. *British and Other Societies:* Church Missionary Society, 1851; Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society, 1890's; German Lutheran, 1853; Jerusalem and the East Mission, 1888; London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, 1820's (later Church Mission to Jews—see Israel).

A full catalogue of agencies with Christian purpose or missionary motivation working in the Middle East would include:

(1) The Bible Societies.

(2) The great independent educational institutions, such as Robert College, 1863, and the Women's College, 1871, in Istanbul; the American University of Beirut, 1866, in association with which in recent years has been International College, originally in Izmir (Smyrna), Turkey; and the American University at Cairo, 1920. These are not missionary institutions in the usual sense of the word, but are known to be based on Christian motivation and purpose.

(3) The Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. in many places.

(4) Several independent orphanages and hospitals.

(5) The community churches or denominational congregations for English-speaking and other foreign-language groups in many of the larger cities.

The majority of the churches and missions listed above cooperate in a single area organ of Christian unity, the Near East Christian Council, which is a constituent of the International Missionary Council. West Pakistan likewise has a Christian Council that is a part of the All Pakistan Christian

Council. Many of the churches are members of the World Council of Churches. There are several smaller national or regional councils, which are in turn constituents of the Near East Christian Council. These are the Egypt Inter-Mission Council, North Sudan Christian Council, United Christian Council of Southwest Asia, and Church Council of Iran. There are several other national or regional councils in North Africa, South Sudan, and Ethiopia which are not related to the Near East Christian Council.

A Selected Reading List

Leaders of study groups may order the Friendship Press books listed below from denominational literature headquarters. From these same sources, they may also order *Adult Guide on the Middle East*, by Y. Armajani, priced at 50 cents, which contains program plans for using *Middle East Pilgrimage* and other Friendship Press materials.

Books of other publishers are listed as additional resources. The views expressed in them are not necessarily those of the author or publishers of *Middle East Pilgrimage*.

FRIENDSHIP PRESS BOOKS

Badeau, John. *The Lands Between.* A well organized, popularly written source book on the geography, history and peoples of the Middle East. Cloth $2.95, paper $1.75.

Baly, Denis. *Multitudes in the Valley.* An objective presentation of today's issues in the Palestinian area. Student edition, paper $2.25. Greenwich, Conn.: Seabury Press, cloth with photographs, $5.00.

Blumberg, John. *This Is the Middle East.* A new addition to the pictorial "This Is" series. Paper only, 60 cents.

Geren, Paul. *New Voices, Old Worlds.* Popularly written biographies of Middle East Christians who are distinguished for their courage as well as their faith. Cloth $2.95, paper $1.50.

Harrison, Ann M. A *Tool in His Hand.* A biographical narrative of the achievements of a Christian doctor in Arabia. Cloth $2.95, paper $1.50.

Wilson, J. Christy. *Introducing Islam.* Valuable new material has been added to bring this study of the religion of the Muslims up to date. Paper only, 60 cents.

Wysner, Glora. *Caught in the Middle.* The author stresses the problems of Middle East youth as they seek a place in the changing world. Cloth $2.95, paper $1.50.

BOOKS OF OTHER PUBLISHERS

An asterisk marks the volumes recommended as most helpful for those who must choose only one or two books on each topic.

Middle East History, Politics, and Social Conditions

*Atiyah, Edward. *The Arabs.* Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, Inc., 1955.

*Faris, N. A., and Husayn, M. T. *The Crescent in Crisis.* Lawrence, Kan.: University of Kansas Press, 1955.

*Kirk, George E. *A Short History of the Middle East.* Washington, D. C.: Public Affairs Press, 1949.

*Morrison, S. A. *Middle East Tensions.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954.

Antonius, George. *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement.* Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1939.

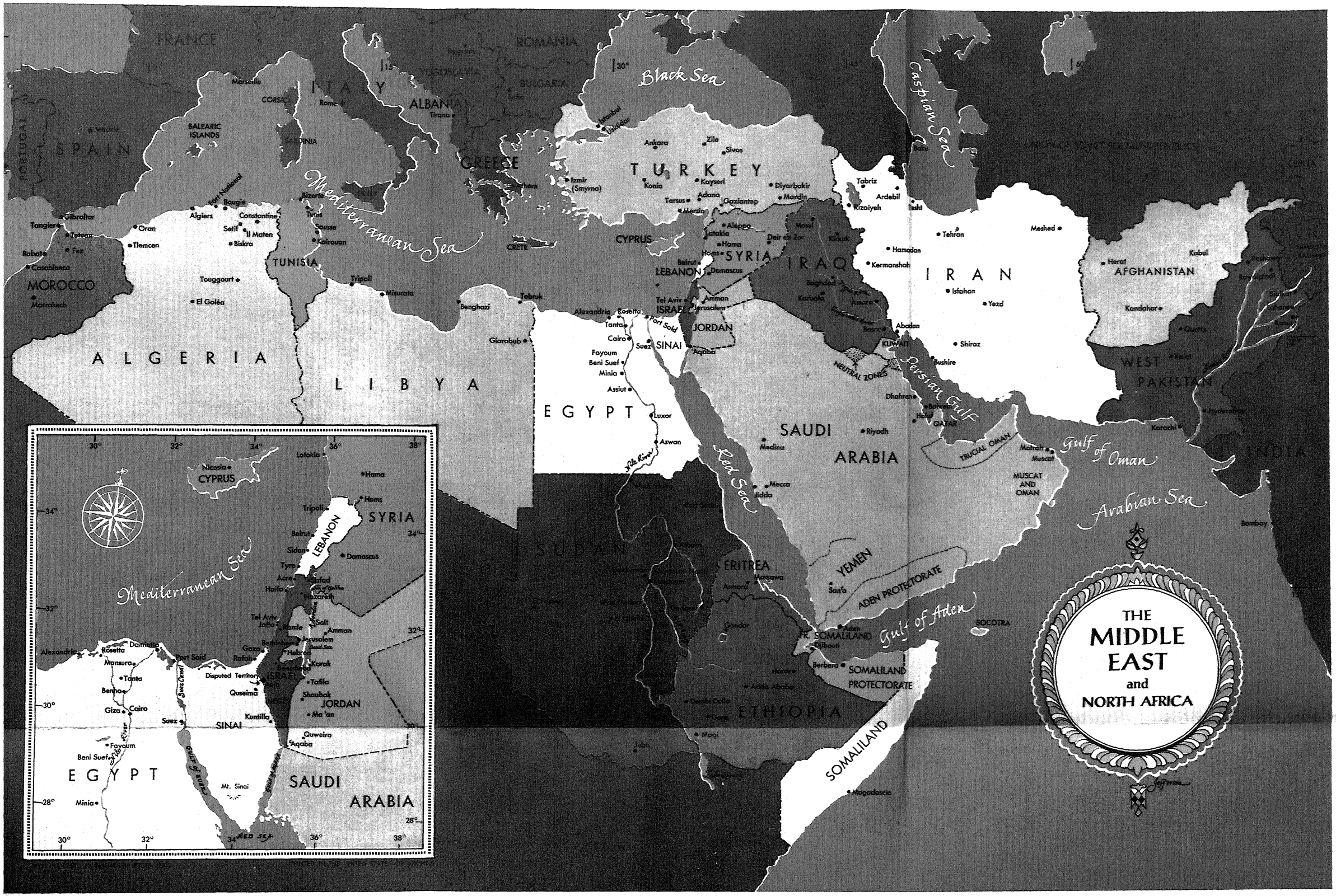
Ellis, Harry B. Israel and the Middle East. New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1957.

Fisher, Sydney Nettleton (ed.). *Social Forces in the Middle East.* Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1955.

Frye, Richard N. (ed.). *The Near East and the Great Powers.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951.

Hitti, Philip K. *The Arabs: A Short History.* Chicago: Gateway Editions, Inc., 1956.

THE MIDDLE EAST and NORTH AFRICA



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